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## THE FLIRTATIONS OF CAPTAIN CAVENDISH.



### CHAPTER I.

HAVE my readers ever travelled in the Tyrol? If not, let me advise them to spend the first holiday-time at their command (provided it be in the summer) in that most charming country. Without the overpowering grandeur of Switzerland, its scenery is in many places very magnificent; and throughout the whole of it there is a novelty and interest especially acceptable to those who have, season after season, traversed the beautiful Swiss valleys, and desire 'something new,' after the fashion of all mankind in this nineteenth century. The inns,

though very homely, and in many cases positively repulsive as to out-  
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ward appearance, invariably afford clean and comfortable bedrooms; the people, with few exceptions, are a most genial, hospitable race, and as yet free from the greed which characterises their Swiss neighbours.

On a lovely afternoon in August, one of the ordinary little conveyances of the Tyrol might have been seen descending the terribly rough steep road between Winklern and Lienz. These conveyances are none of the most luxurious, being, for the greater part, spring-carts (the springs in a very doubtful condition), drawn by a horse tied to one side of the pole which is invariably used instead of shafts. The seat is often merely a board, with a heap of hay or straw placed on it, and a blanket thrown over all, and holding two people, whilst the driver sits on the ledge of the machine in front, at one's feet. This was the sort of vehicle which we are going to watch at present, except that it had no springs of any kind, owing to the nature of the road it had to pass over. A lady of about five-and-thirty was seated in it, fat and short, and dark in complexion. Her expression, which did not appear to be of the most amiable naturally, was not improved by the severe jolting she was undergoing—and no wonder. Another lady, ten years her junior, walked behind; she was also short, but fair and florid, and of rather a heavy and prosaic aspect. There was a strong resemblance between the two, who in fact were sisters—the Misses Brooks, whose parents had been long dead. They lived together in a small house in May Fair, and were now disporting themselves among the mountains, like a large portion of the British public at that time of year.

'Amelia!' said Miss Brooks, in a sharp voice, after a somewhat protracted silence, 'what nonsense it is your fatiguing yourself in this way, toiling along under such a sun! you had much better get into the carriage.'

'No, thank you,' replied Amelia; 'the carriage, as you call it, is by no means inviting, and you don't look

particularly happy in it, I can assure you.'

'As to that,' retorted her sister, 'you need not speak; you are the very image of a lobster, and no amount of glycerine cream, or elder-flower water will give you a respectable complexion for months to come.'

'Well, the carriage would do me no good in that respect,' said Amelia, 'and I prefer walking.'

So the two proceeded in silence, till a sharp turn of the road brought them suddenly in view of the dolomite mountains—those strange, weird, unearthly mountains, worth travelling thousands of miles to see for themselves alone. There is no verdure on them, save for a short distance up the base. Even the tenacious pine soon loses all footing; and the bare rocky summits stand up gloriously into the sky, taking a hundred fantastic shapes. Icebergs, cathedral spires, human beings, gigantic coronets, and ghostly pointing fingers, are all represented there; and the eye never wearies of gazing on their quaint variety. Both the sisters uttered exclamations of surprise and delight; and the elder gladly seized the excuse to rest her aching bones for a few minutes by stopping to gaze on the wild prospect before her.

'Well, this really is something new!' said she; 'and I must say it is almost worth all the jolting and botheration we have had.'

'Oh, it is worth far more than that!' replied Amelia, with a sudden burst of enthusiasm.

'Do you really think so?' said a voice close by; and, turning hastily, the ladies beheld the reclining form of Mr. Harman, stretched on a little grassy bank just round the turn of the road. This gentleman, with whom they had been slightly acquainted in England, and whom they had two or three times encountered in the course of their present excursion, had left the inn at Winklern at a much earlier hour than themselves in the morning; so it was an agreeable surprise to find him here—the more so as Miss Brooks suspected at times that he admired her extremely; for it was

an amiable trait in Clotilda that she never could believe the male portion of society to be so shamefully callous to her charms as appearances might have led one to suppose; but every new-comer she magnanimously credited with the ardent desire to redeem his sex from the horrible stigma on their taste, caused by her being yet, at the age of thirty-five, in the enjoyment of single bliss.

'Do you really think so?' said Mr. Harman. 'Well now, I cannot agree with you; I confess these mountains bore me, and make me feel uncomfortable; I did not expect to find them so unlike their brethren in other parts of the world. In fact, Miss Brooks, I have a strong suspicion that this was originally Nature's great Bedlam. All the mad mountains were sent here, and they have continued to grow madder and madder ever since.'

'Dear me, Mr. Harman, what absurd ideas do come into your head!' said Clotilda, her face now wreathed in smiles, and showing no traces of its former crustiness: 'but how do you happen to be still here?'

'Well, I am not afflicted with that perpetual desire to "move on" which characterises weak minds. It was hot: the Maniacs took me somewhat by surprise; so I sat down to contemplate, and have remained absorbed in contemplation until now that my solitude is so agreeably broken.'

'And pray how much longer do you intend to remain in this attractive spot?' said Miss Brooks.

'Until you render it wholly unendurable by removing your presence from it,' replied he, with a mock-gallant bow.

Miss Brooks was highly delighted, and presently discovered that the road was getting much rougher, and that she would be greatly the better of walking the rest of the way to Lienz. Amelia pursed up her lips scornfully, knowing right well that nothing short of the presence of a specimen of the noble gender would have induced Clotilda to walk a step on such a day. But conscious as she must have been that she herself was not wholly unalive to such

influence, let us hope that she was not too severe on her sister in her heart.

By slow degrees, and with many stoppages for rest and admiration, the trio at length reached Lienz. At the door of the Post-inn, Mr. Harman found an old friend, watching the new arrivals come up the long empty street; and they hailed each other with that intense satisfaction which an encounter in solitary foreign parts produces, even in the minds of those who are not over congenial to each other in England. Captain Cavendish was a retired Indian officer, with a tolerable income. He was by no means handsome: thin, sallow, loose in the joints, about eight-and-forty years of age, and had all his life been afflicted with an unquenchable thirst for matrimony; in consequence of which he regarded every unmarried lady he met as the future possible Mrs. Cavendish, to be tested and tried with a view to her capacity for undertaking that great position. But it so happened that, whenever matters seemed to be running smoothly, and likely to come to a favourable termination, the Captain found he never could make up his mind that he had really discovered that perfection which his noble nature craved. Was it certain the lady was handsome enough, and young enough? (to do him justice, he had greatly moderated his expectations in these two respects of late years.) Was she rich enough, and well-connected enough, and, above all things, did she fully appreciate him and his poetic gifts? (For the soul of Captain Cavendish was a very fountain of Poesy, as he would have himself expressed it, gushing out, bursting forth either in his own words or in other people's, on all appropriate or inappropriate occasions.) With these doubtings and questionings he harassed his own mind and that of his confidant for the time being to such an extent that it was a relief to both when the opportunity slipped through his fingers. Now-a-days, however, he felt that the years were sliding fast away, and that, if he wished to secure the great object of his life,

he must 'make hay' whilst any remains of sun shone. He was therefore delighted to behold two English ladies, introduced to him as the Misses Brooks by his friend; and Clotilda, on her part, was charmed at making this new acquaintance; though her satisfaction was slightly damped by his alluding to 'the ladies,' who, it appeared, were resting after a long walk; for Clotilda was most firmly of opinion that the fewer ladies and the more gentlemen, the better for the forming of agreeable society.

At the table-d'hôte, where the whole party soon met, 'the ladies' proved to be Captain Cavendish's sister, Mrs. Melville, and her handsome daughter Amy. In the Tyrol even English stiffness perishes speedily, and acquaintanceships are soon struck up. These ladies therefore were very soon *au fait* with each other's plans, quantity of baggage, dresses, grievances, &c. &c.; and, finding that their routes lay together for some way, they agreed to start in company on the morrow. After dinner, Mrs. Melville's bedroom being the most spacious, she declared it to be the drawing-room, and invited the Brookses to come and sit there, which they gladly did.

After a great deal of conversation, and many discoveries of mutual friends, Mrs. Melville asked who the Mr. Harman was who had arrived at the same time with them, and whom her brother seemed to know so well. Clotilda tried to look conscious (but failed), whilst Amelia explained that he was the eldest son of Sir James Harman, a north-country baronet of rather limited means.

'We met him first at my uncle's, Sir George Trevilian's,' added Clotilda, imposingly.

'Oh!' said Mrs. Melville, with a half smile, glancing at her daughter, 'it is that Mr. Harman? We have heard a good deal of him from a friend of his, Mr. Charles Sydney.'

'What, the Mr. Sydney who is so clever, and writes in all sorts of magazines?' said Amelia.

'My dear Amelia!' broke in the older sister, 'how can you say he is

clever? He appeared to me very much the reverse. Any goose may write in some magazines, I am sure; and Mrs. Erskine Leigh, who knows him well, assured me that his articles were, like himself, excessively stupid.' (From which observations we may infer that Mr. Sydney had displayed a vast amount of that obtuseness afore-mentioned so painfully common to his sex with regard to Clotilda.)

A very awkward pause ensued after this speech. Miss Melville grew crimson, and left the room.

'I am sorry to tell you, Miss Brooks,' said Mrs. Melville, coldly, 'that my daughter is engaged to Mr. Sydney—in fact they are to be married in two months. Mrs. Erskine Leigh is an intimate friend of mine, and I cannot help thinking you are mistaken in putting such an opinion into her mouth.'

It was not much in Clotilda's way to be abashed; but even she could not help feeling greatly taken back by this announcement. She stammered out several unintelligible apologies, and shortly withdrew from the room, followed by Amelia. When they had departed, Amy put her head cautiously in at the door; 'Is that nasty creature gone, mamma?' said she. 'Oh, mamma, wasn't it horrid of her to say such things? and do you think that was true about Mrs. Erskine Leigh, after her pretending that she liked Charles so much, and admired his writings so?'

'There was no pretence about it, my dear,' said Mrs. Melville. 'I don't know a more honest, straightforward person than Mrs. Erskine Leigh. It is some complete misapprehension on the part of Miss Brooks.'

'Or invention, I dare say,' said Amy, in an irritated tone. 'What a bore it is!—we promised to travel with them to-morrow. Can't we get off it, and stay on here for a day or two?'

'Certainly, my love; you shall not be annoyed on any account, and we shall remain quietly here till the Misses Brooks have a good start of us.'

But this plan was not to hold



good. Amelia, with a strong suspicion of how it would be, and anxious to avoid the pleasure of travelling alone with her sister as long as possible, wrung a reluctant consent from the latter that she should be the bearer of apologies to Mrs. Melville next morning before breakfast; and accordingly she went to that lady's room before she had left it, and drew a powerful picture of Clotilda's mental sufferings since committing the fatal mistake—the sleepless night she had passed, and the remorse to which she was at present a prey—till the kind-hearted Mrs. Melville and her daughter, alarmed lest brain-fever should be the result of so much anguish, hastened to send fervent messages to the effect that she was to think no more of it, and that they would all forget it as fast as possible, and make up their minds to be very happy whilst they were together. Amelia further explained, that, on thinking over it, her sister remembered that it was of an entirely different gentleman Mrs. Erskine Leigh made the remark she had repeated. (It is highly probable that Mrs. Erskine Leigh had never made any such observation at all; for Clotilda had a vast fund of imagination, on which she drew largely when at a loss for proofs of any of her assertions). So peace was signed and sealed, and Amelia was greatly relieved. As to Clotilda, she had cared very little about it after the first few awkward minutes; she 'could not understand people making a fuss about nothing,' but she felt it would have been a pity to separate, for a doubt was stealing over her as to whether Mr. Harman was not merely good for fine speeches and nothing farther; whereas, Captain Cavendish might be a much more practicable man, 'though so very ugly.' It struck her, moreover, that this was rather a favourable opportunity for beginning an intimacy with the said Captain; and finding herself alone with him in the public room after breakfast, when the others had gone to see after their packing, she assumed a sorrowful and dejected aspect, and said, in moving tones,

'Oh! Captain Cavendish, I am so unhappy to-day!'

The Captain, astonished, yet flattered at this sudden confidence, replied, 'I deeply grieve to hear it, Miss Brooks. May I venture to ask why to-day?'

"Glad Nature wears her fairest look,  
All, all is joy! Each rill, each brook,  
Takes back the tint, &c."

You know the lines? Why then, may I ask, this sadness to-day?

'He is poetical; what a bore!' thought Clotilda, to herself, for she was very far from being so, and found it an unpleasant strain, which however she had had occasion to make sometimes before to accommodate herself to beings of a poetical tendency. 'I made such an unfortunate mistake, last night,' said she; 'I repeated some foolish, and I am sure, very untrue remarks I had heard about the gentleman to whom your niece is engaged—of course knowing nothing of that arrangement—and you can't imagine how wretched I have been since! Your sister and niece have been good enough to send me some kind messages which relieved my mind, but I don't know how I am to get over it.'

'Yours, Miss Brooks, I perceive, is one of those "spirits" finely touched, alluded to by the immortal bard, endowed with a sensitiveness almost too keen for the shocks of this rude world. But I do beg of you to think no more of such a very trifling matter. I can answer for it that my niece has entirely forgotten it by this time, and I trust you will speedily adopt the words of the poet—

"Hence, loath'd Melancholy!  
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born,  
In Stygian cave forlorn,  
'Mid horrid shapes and sights and shrieks unholy."

'You are very good,' said Clotilda, dejectedly; 'and you poets have a wonderful way of smoothing the troubles of life—but would that I could forget!'

'Clotilda! I wish you would come up and sit on the boxes, that I may get them locked,' said Amelia at this moment, putting her head in at the door.

Clotilda's languor vanished at once, and she rose briskly from her seat to go up-stairs to the rebellious trunks. 'All I can say is, Amelia,' said she, 'that if the boxes want sitting on, you must have been stuffing things in, in a very careless manner, and I dare say I shall have to take them all out again.' Which proved to be the case.

'A fine energetic creature!' reflected the Captain; 'and at the same time so sensitive, so gentle, so tender-hearted; there is a beautiful versatility of disposition about her, and she has already discovered my—a—my gift. A superior creature that, and one to be carefully cultivated!'

That day the party proceeded to Innichen, and the day following through the magnificent Ampezzo Pass, in the very midst of the dolomites, to Cortina, where they proposed remaining a few days. The mountains are not so fine or so interesting here as at Höllestein, a little place which is passed *en route*; in fact, they are somewhat dreary and savage at first sight. But this is the best possible head-quarters for thoroughly exploring the dolomites of the district, and glorious views are to be obtained from those heights, which are accessible. But people who go there must be strong, and fit for an immense deal of walking. There is no provision made for riding; and even if there were, it would in many excursions be perfectly useless, owing to the steepness and ruggedness of the ascents.

The hosts of the Aquila Nera are civil and obliging people, and it is a comfort, after having one's ears tortured by the unmusical German of the Tyrol, to hear the soft Italian language spoken; but the inhabitants of Cortina generally, have a most uncouth and uncivilized appearance, and are the most inveterate starrers to be met with anywhere. Amy Melville and Amelia Brooks, however, were very fair Italian scholars, and quickly made friends with a number of the children first, and afterwards with the elders. Clotilda sketched tolerably well, and Captain Cavendish carried

her camp-stool and other apparatus, and made himself generally useful to her. Mr. Harman botanized, and Mrs. Melville enjoyed the fine air and scenery, and the short remaining time in which she was to have her daughter all to herself. The flirtation, or whatever it might be called, between her brother and Miss Brooks, she viewed with the utmost indifference, having witnessed the rise, decline, and fall of many a score of *grandes passions* on the Captain's part, and Clotilda seemed very well able to take care of herself. That lady, however, was beginning to be a little uneasy; why tarried the Captain's proposal? There was no want of opportunity, for they were constantly together; and she shuddered as she thought of the volumes of poetry which had been spouted to her. Why was the reward of such endurance so long withheld?

'I say, Harman,' said Captain Cavendish, one evening as they were smoking their cigars previous to 'turning in,' 'I want to ask you about these Misses Brooks—nice girls, eh?'

'I don't know them much,' said Harman, cautiously, for he did not know what his friend might be meditating.

'Oh! but we've seen a good deal of them here, you know; the eldest is a shrewd, clever young woman, with a vast deal of mind.'

'Not very young,' suggested Harman.

'Ah, well, you know, you can't call her old; and I dare say any fellow she married she would make very happy—don't you think so? I should like to have your opinion.'

'I think I'd prefer the younger one, myself,' said Harman.

'No! would you though? She certainly has a fair complexion, which I like, but she doesn't talk; she has none of the *esprit* of her sister—in fact, is she not rather heavy in hand?'

'Perhaps,' said Harman: 'I should fancy she was better tempered than the other.'

'Really! you think so; well, I must try to find out a little more about both, before doing anything

rash. Thank you, Harman; I really am much obliged for the advice you have given me.

And they went into the house, Harman wholly unconscious of having given the 'advice' for which the Captain expressed so much gratitude.

The next day Amelia's probation began: there had been a little excursion and pic-nic planned, and when the three little Einspanners came to the door, Clotilda stepped into hers, expecting as a matter of course that the Captain would take his seat by her side.

'Make haste, Captain Cavendish,' said she, 'and get in, for I am so afraid of strange horses, and this one looks impatient of standing already.'

'Oh! you need not be afraid of the horse,' replied he; 'he is quiet enough, and I must not be selfish; here is my niece longing to have a drive with you.'

And, to the disgust of both ladies, he bundled Amy in, and jumped himself into the vehicle in which Amelia was seated, greatly to her surprise, and by no means to her delight, for she did not admire the Captain. After some indifferent conversation about the places they were passing, the day, the excursion; &c., &c., the Captain began to test.

'What a true artist mind your sister's is, Miss Amelia,' said he; 'those last sketches of hers are lovely, positively lovely.'

'Pretty well, I think,' returned Amelia, indifferently.

'She is jealous of her sister,' thought the Captain.

'Ah! surely more than "pretty well?" that sketch of the Drei Zinna is admirable, truly admirable!'

'They are fine mountains,' said Amelia.

'You love fine scenery, do you not? for me, I confess that whilst passing through loveliness like this, I realise the words of the poet—

"There is a pleasure in the pathless woods;  
There is a rapture by the lonely shore;"

'and my feelings involuntarily find relief in the heart-stirring words of another poet—

"Breathe there a man with soul so dead,  
Who never to himself hath said,  
This is a fair and beautiful land!"

'(I alter the words slightly, you observe, to suit the sense). Oh! the sky, the trees, the very air itself on a day like this, are fraught with rapture to the poetic soul!'

'I find that the air here gives me an excellent appetite,' said Amelia.

'I rejoice that you should find the atmosphere salubrious,' said the Captain, much taken back. 'Under present circumstances, however, the appetite of the soul and mind perhaps make themselves more powerfully felt than that of the mere—a corporeal frame, don't you think so? There is a—what shall I say?—a hunger and a thirst to partake of the ambrosia of the gods in place of ignobler food, and to drink deep and long at the Parnassian rills.'

'Oh! that reminds me,' said Amelia, 'I'm so dreadfully thirsty, and I have a little bottle of cold tea in a small basket under the seat; would you get it for me? I always drink cold tea in preference to anything else, it is so wholesome.'

The Captain did as he was bid, and relapsed into silence for a considerable time after this, but at last recovered himself a little.

'I rather think, Miss Amelia,' said he, in an insinuating voice, 'that we have one taste in common. I observed a tell-tale manuscript book peeping out of your work-basket, last night! I have filled, I may almost say, thousands of such volumes myself; it is truly delightful, is it not, to have the congenial thoughts of all poets close at hand, and ready to refer to when one feels in the mood? I have no doubt I should find in your collection those sweet lines of Waller's (unfortunately too little known), beginning,

"Go, lovely rose,  
Tell her that wastes her time and me,  
That now she knows  
When I resemble her to thee,  
How sweet and fair she seems to be;"

'Oh dear no,' said Amelia; 'you are mistaken, I have no collection: what you saw is my recipe-book. I always carry it about, for I find

it so useful to pick up things here and there. Your sister had promised me a recipe for anchovy toast, and I had brought my book down to copy it in—that was all.

Almost desperate, the Captain made one more manly struggle. (I will try her with the Bell of Bokherat, thought he, and if that fails, I give her up).

‘Perhaps, then,’ he resumed, ‘you are a lover of original poetry—you write a little yourself?’ (Amelia shook her stolid head) ‘or you prefer to hear it gushing from the living spring, instead of through the medium of letter-press? If I might venture to repeat a little thing of my own, which I composed in India, about an alarm-bell in a tower, in the district in which I was then quartered, it might interest you. Some persons to whom I have repeated it have been good enough to say that they had never met with anything more—a—touching, even—a—beautiful and pathetic; (their kindness only, of course,) but you shall judge—

“‘Oh! sweetly, sadly, softly still,  
A sorrowing sound each heart to thrill  
Sweeps through the vale.  
The booming bell of Bokherat!  
What wild, wild woe has whirled on that  
Devoted dale!’

“‘Ah! by that baleful blaze so bright  
Those lightning leaps of lurid—”

‘Oh! stop the man,’ cried Amelia, (she meant the driver) Fermatevi! ‘Captain Cavendish, I am certain I saw some wild strawberries there, under the hedge; do get down and pick them for me: I am so fond of those strawberries!’

And Amelia showed more animation than she had displayed throughout the drive. In a state of utter collapse, the Captain descended from the vehicle, and looked for the supposed fruit, which turned out to be merely red leaves. ‘I am glad of it,’ thought he, savagely, when he began slowly to come to himself, after the shock he had received. ‘I am glad I was not made the instrument for ministering to her low tastes. Strawberries! and in the very midst of the Bell! What a fate to marry a woman like this!

“‘I to herd with such a narrow forehead;

So intensely vacant of our glorious gains!’

‘Heaven forbid!’ No more attempts did the wretched Captain make to draw Amelia out: he had drawn only too much out as it was, and a perfect silence was preserved between them during the rest of the way. When they arrived at the chosen spot for the picnic, he eagerly sought Clotilda; but that lady received him with decided frigidity, and calling Mr. Harman to her side, she contrived to keep him there for the rest of the day, and made herself as agreeable as she possibly could, to his great amusement, and the evident uneasiness of Captain Cavendish, who, in consequence, made up his mind to propose that very day. She gave him no opportunity, however, taking possession of Mr. Harman for the drive home. Amelia and Mrs. Melville went together, and he found himself with his niece. The Captain had not had a happy day, and wore a lugubrious countenance.

‘Come, Uncle Ned, don’t look so woe-begone,’ said Amy, laughing. ‘What on earth has happened to you? Have you proposed to one of the Misses Brooks, and been refused, or what?’

‘Amy,’ replied her uncle, with solemnity, ‘you are shortly to enter the married state; and I should think, I should hope, you feel that there are certain subjects on which light jesting is unsuitable. No, Amy, I have not proposed to Miss Brooks; had I done so—had I ventured to do so—a person so superior in all mental endowments to the ordinary individuals of her sex might, in fact probably would, have refused me; but —

‘Nonsense, uncle,’ said Amy. ‘You know better; it is quite evident she is in love with you (and just see how she was playing off Mr. Harman against you to-day); but I hope you are not in love with her, for I am sure you might find a nicer wife.’

A gratified smile overspread the Captain’s features, and his gloom began to take wing.

‘As to Miss Brooks’s sentiments towards me, my dear,’ said he, ‘they

are those of friendship, nothing more; depend upon it, nothing more. As to my finding a (to use your own not too apt or choice expression) nicer wife, there opinions might differ. True, I may perhaps, in India and elsewhere, have been favoured above others, and above my merits, with the smiles of the gifted and the beautiful. But no one can say Clotilda Brooks is not gifted; and at times when I have been repeating to her some heart-stirring lines of exquisite loveliness, her features have kindled into a beauty almost seraphic.

Amy said no more; but she and her mother enjoyed a hearty laugh in their own room, at the idea of Miss Brooks suddenly developing into a seraph.

The same evening, over their cigars as usual, Captain Cavendish, who, since his niece's reassuring speech, had entirely forgotten his little fit of jealousy of Mr. Harman, confided to that gentleman the dismal results of his experiments upon Amelia, at which he could not help laughing. 'But,' said he, 'it is a fortunate thing, for matters are much simplified now.'

'You have fairly decided against the younger sister, so there is nothing to be done but to go in for the eldest. After breakfast to-morrow, you will, of course, propose to her?'

But, relieved from his uneasiness, the Captain felt by no means disposed to rush so soon upon his doom.

'But, my dear fellow,' said he, 'I don't think it does to be rash in such a momentous matter; and when one comes to think of it, might not—might not a little more height, and a little less—what do you call it?—*embonpoint* be desirable?'

'That is entirely a matter of taste,' replied Harman; 'but as we are still to be here for a few days, you can take a little more time to make up your mind.'

'Exactly, exactly, my dear friend,' said the Captain eagerly; 'I agree with you; you always give me the best advice: good-night—no, I will not be rash—good-night.'

## CHAPTER II.

So the Captain refrained from rashness, greatly to Clotilda's surprise. The next day she graciously restored her recreant knight, who was most humble and abject, to favour, and permitted him to perform his usual little services, never doubting that she would be invited, ere set of sun, to bestow her hand and heart upon his unworthiness. But though the Captain was very devoted, and in proof thereof recited the whole of Thomson and the greater part of Milton, Shakespeare, Burns, Longfellow, Scott, and Byron (at least so it appeared to the nauseated Clotilda), yet the sun rose and declined and finally sank behind the dolomites without the little affair having made any progress. Shortly before dinner next day, Mr. Harman joined Mrs. Melville and her daughter and Amelia, who were sitting with their books and work in a sheltered place among the rocks a little way out of the village, whilst Clotilda sketched not far off, her usual attendant seated by her. 'News!' cried he, throwing himself down on the grass, 'be thankful to me and make much of me for I bring news. What do you think of an arrival of English people at the *Aquila Nera*!'

'English people!' cried Amy and Amelia at once, 'Who are they? What are they? Where do they come from? What are they going to do?'

'I knew that,' returned he, laughing—'I knew I should be assailed by a storm of questions, so I took care to be provided with a little information beforehand. I waited till they had put their names in the visitors' book, and settled their rooms, and till I had held a short parley with one of them, and here I am!'

'Well, then, tell us all about them,' said Amy, laughing, 'if your self-satisfaction will permit!'

'Now I call that ungrateful, Miss Melville; however I am magnanimous by nature and I will forgive you. Well, to begin with the most "difficile," if not the most important member of the party, there is a



severe lady's-maid of forbidding aspect, rejoicing in the name of Grimshaw, who has already quarrelled with the whole establishment on account of various personal grievances. Her room is at the top of the house; she is sure the windows have not been opened for a month; the bed is too hard; the pillows too soft; the sheets are rough; the chairs are of cushionless deal; the basin and jug don't match in pattern, and —

'Oh! come, come,' said Mrs. Melville, laughing, 'you are inventing; besides, how could she say all that to the people? for I do not suppose she is an Italian scholar.'

'No, but the wretched courier is obliged to act interpreter, and a nice time he is having of it, I should say. Then there is a papa, six feet three, age fifty, accustomed to lord it wherever he goes (except, I presume over the maid), and lastly, there is a daughter, rather pretty, blonde, great blue eyes and that sort of thing, but very languid and die-away; in fact, intended to be taken for a very fine lady indeed. I think so, but let us be charitable! The name, I grieve to say, is not beautiful, in fact, it is Bodger—and Sir John Bodger is a widower and an alderman, and has made heaps of money in the City. All these facts I have gathered in the course of my short conversation with him.'

'There can be no doubt you have made a pretty good use of your opportunities,' said Amy; 'perhaps they may be nice people, although their name is Bodger.'

'Bodger!' said Clotilda, who came up at that moment with her cavalier, in a tone of ineffable disgust; 'the idea of anything called Bodger being even bearable! who are you talking about?' So the story was told over again.

'And there!' said Mr. Harman, in conclusion, clapping Captain Cavendish on the shoulder, 'is a City heiress for you, my boy; you had better try your luck with her.' The captain, of course pricked up his ears and looked interested; but Clotilda, who had long made up her mind that Mr. Harman was not

the man she had taken him for, now decided that he was positively odious.

'What a bore,' said she, 'that such people should come here to spoil our party! I shall vote for our starting at once for Innsbruck.'

'In the first place,' said Mrs. Melville, 'we must start for the hotel, as it is close upon dinner-time,' and they all went back.

At dinner they made acquaintance with the new arrival. The perfidious Captain contrived to sit next Miss Bodger, and Clotilda had the pleasure of seeing him make himself as agreeable as he could to her after his own fashion; she responding to his transcendental remarks and poetic quotations, by a languid smile and occasional interjections of 'La! how sweet!' and the Captain was perfectly pleased. Sir John sat on his daughter's other hand. 'Madam,' said he, addressing Miss Melville, 'I am sure you agree with me that this is a most savage, most detestable country, without even the necessaries of life, I may say: I asked just now for champagne, having finished the little stock I brought with me; and, would you believe it? not a bottle have they in the house—not one bottle! though, by the way, you must ere this have discovered that for yourself.'

'I should never have dreamt of finding such a thing here,' said Mrs. Melville; 'but I seldom drink it at any rate.'

'Indeed! my daughter, Miss Bodger, invariably drinks it at luncheon and dinner at home. You may, therefore, judge how great the privation is to her.'

'One comfort for her is,' replied Mrs. Melville, 'that they say there is nothing so good as a complete change in every respect when one is abroad, and I think there is something in that.'

Sir John looked disgusted. 'My daughter is a young lady of great delicacy and refinement,' said he; 'and I own I tremble at the effect which the want of her ordinary comforts may have upon her.'

'That must spoil your pleasure greatly,' said Mrs. Melville. 'I am

thankful to say I have no such fears for my daughter. She is very strong, and a little roughing seems to do her good.'

'How very fortunate you are,' replied Sir John, glancing first with contempt at Amy's blooming cheeks, and then with pride at the sickly complexion of his daughter. 'Maria Jane has always been a tender plant, yet she would come to the Tyrol. Her intimate friends, the families of Alderman Stobbs and Sir Thomas Gubbins have all been in Switzerland, so she said, "Papa, we must go to the Tyrol; and then Jane Stobbs and Mary Anne Gubbins will be dying of envy all winter when they hear me talk of it. And if they go next summer," said she, "we'll wait till they are fairly off; and we'll go to Denmark that everybody talks of now (if it does not take more than two hours to cross to it), or to Iceland, or to some place where they've never been;" for the dear girl never could bear anything commonplace, and I am sure the young ladies here will agree with me,' added the worthy knight, with a sweeping bow which included Clotilda, and poured a little balm into her chafed spirit. 'Young ladies!' and that wretch, throwing languishing looks upon Maria Jane at such a rate, Miss Brooks made up her mind to patronize Sir John.

'No; I for one don't agree,' said Amy. 'I love Switzerland, and am never tired of going there—besides, one ought to be glad that so many people can enjoy it now, who could not formerly, before the journey was so cheap and easy.'

'The hotels are so comfortable, besides,' added Amelia, 'that that makes up for everything else.'

Sir John stared. 'Surely,' said he, 'it cannot but be revolting to persons of delicacy and refinement to have to rub shoulders with the "common herd," I may say, at every moment?'

'You are quite right, Sir John,' interposed Clotilda, as Amy was about to reply. 'I quite share your daughter's feelings. The last time I was at the *Hôtel des Alpes*, at Interlachen, and the *Schweizerhof*, in Lucerne, I really was disgusted

at the mob of vulgar people one encountered, and I was thankful to get out of them.'

'I am charmed to find you agree with me,' replied Sir John, his brows relaxing, and a gracious expression pervading his countenance, at finding himself no longer differed from, a position he was little accustomed to, and he and Miss Brooks engaged during the remainder of dinner in an animated conversation, if conversation it could be called, which consisted in a chorus of dislikes to vulgarity, and non-refinement, and common-placeness, and the rough travelling of the Tyrol.

Mr. Harman watched Captain Cavendish with intense amusement. It was evident there would now be a struggle in his mind between the comparative merits of Miss Brooks and Miss Bodger, which would in all probability end in favour of the latter. After dinner, Maria Jane, being delicate, retired to her apartment in company with Grimshaw and a four-volume novel, and was no more seen that day. Sir John, after a nap in an un-easy chair, with a handkerchief thrown over his face to keep off the flies, strolled out in front, and was speedily joined by Clotilda, who had kept watch upon his movements from an upper window. In the course of a walk, a good deal more sympathy in all Sir John's tastes and ideas developed itself, and a few allusions to her maternal uncle, Sir George Trevelian, a real live baronet, quite confirmed Miss Brooks in a very high position in Sir John's estimation.

'Upon my word, my dear,' said he to his daughter, as he paid her a visit to say 'good night,' 'that Miss Brooks is a most clever, intelligent person; a baronet's niece, too, and her uncle married Lady Erminia Travers, a daughter of Lord Medlicott: really a very high connection!'

'She does not look very aristocratic, papa,' returned Maria Jane; 'but that's nothing. I am sure some of the duchesses I have seen going to the drawing-rooms are plain enough. I prefer her to that Melville girl—she is just like a dairy-maid.'

'Exactly, my dear; how rustic she looks beside my dearest Maria

Jane! I was quite struck by the contrast.'

'La, papa!' said Maria Jane, smiling; 'and can you tell me who that handsome young fellow is who sat at the end of the table?'

'That gentleman, I ascertain, is a baronet's son—a Mr. Harman, son of Sir James Harman.'

'Is he, indeed?' said Maria Jane, opening her eyes. 'I hope I shall be next him to-morrow, instead of that old goose who was beside me to-day.'

'I feared you were being a good deal worried. Good night, my love; make yourself as comfortable as you can in this wretched place.'

Captain Cavendish of course sought his confidant in the evening. 'I am glad, my dear fellow,' said he, 'I followed your advice and did nothing rash about Miss Brooks. You see there is no saying what may happen now. How did you think I got on with Miss Bodger at dinner? I have no doubt Miss Brooks is a much cleverer person; but there is something highly interesting about Miss Bodger; and she has a fair complexion, and she is an only child—an only child, my dear Harman, think of that! From Sir John's appearance I should say he has 20,000*l.* a year, at least. I suppose he would not make his son-in-law take his name, would he? that might be awkward—Bodger Cavendish—Cavendish Bodger—Well, that does not sound so very bad, eh?'

'What's in a name?' said Harman, smiling.

'Very true; what is in a name? I defy any one to detect in the name of Bodger anything which does not convey the idea of—a—the most intense—what shall I say?—respectability and wealth.'

And the Captain assumed a ferocious expression, as if he were already the affianced husband of Maria Jane, and prepared to do battle for her name with all the world.

Several days passed happily away. Miss Bodger took a fancy for a collection of red leaves of all shades, and Captain Cavendish wore himself out looking for them. The fair lady (with Amelia and Mr. Harman) was generally seated

on a rock awaiting his return, and very often mercilessly sent him away again without allowing him to rest, feeling sure she saw something in the distance much prettier than he had brought; but the Captain felt rather flattered than otherwise. At last, one afternoon, the Brooks received letters from England, telling them that their only brother was suddenly ordered to Canada with his regiment, and that they must come home at once if they wished to see him before he sailed. On this becoming publicly known, Sir John Bodger and his daughter declared that they were sick of the Tyrol, and longing to get back to London, and would be happy to make the journey with the ladies, if agreeable to them; and it *was* agreeable. Captain Cavendish tried hard to persuade his sister to change her plans and go also to England, but she was determined to remain in Tyrol, or some quiet place, till close upon the time for her daughter's marriage. So she agreed to accompany the party as far as Innsbrück, where the parting took place. Mr. Harman and Captain Cavendish were, of course, at the station, to 'assist' at the departure; and the latter busied himself with Maria Jane's shawls and wraps, and made himself generally useful to her.

'Dear me, Mr. Harman!' said Miss Bodger, playfully rallying that gentleman, 'see what it is to be in the army: I declare Captain Cavendish is far more attentive and useful to ladies than you are!'

'Well, as you observe, Miss Bodger,' said he, 'I am not in the army—not even a volunteer,—and we poor civilians have no chance at all with these army fellows.'

Maria Jane looked as if he might have had a chance if he tried; and when he shook hands with her the process appeared to raise her colour slightly. 'Good-bye,' said she, hastily; 'good-bye, Captain Cavendish. Don't forget Nightingale Grove, Wimbledon, and come and see us whenever you come home. Thank you for all your trouble about the leaves; I am sure you have been dreadfully good-natured. Good-bye!' And the train went off: it was

so crowded that the Brookses and Bodgers had to separate and go in different carriages.

'He certainly is a good-natured old fellow, that Captain Cavendish, though he is such a goose,' said Maria Jane, as they whirled along.

'Yes, my love, a worthy creature, though weak, very weak. I admire the way in which Mr. Harman treats him—a superior young man, that. And how fatigued he must be at times by so stupid a companion. One may always observe that high breeding leads people to endure things which the common herd would never dream of doing.'

'That is true,' said Maria Jane; 'he is a baronet's son.'

'And similarly, Miss Brooks,' pursued Sir John, 'she is a baronet's niece; and she shows a strength of mind—a kind of general power of endurance (mingled with great refinement) only to be found amongst the highly connected.'

'I am sure, papa, she had nothing to endure that I saw.'

'Oh! pardon me, my love; she had much to endure. Depend upon it that stupid sister is uncongenial to her, and she was missing the comforts of home; but there can be no doubt at all that she endured. Every line of her face expressed endurance; and, as I said before, I trace it all to her high connections.'

We must return to the station. 'Did you notice that, my dear fellow?' said the Captain, with eager excitement, as the train departed; 'her last looks and words were for me! I regret I did not propose yesterday; she must have expected it, and must think it strange. My dear Harman, there can be no doubt the girl adores me—not the faintest doubt; and I hope you will be groomsman.'

'With pleasure,' said Harman, smiling. 'If you make it all right you will be a lucky dog. And so poor Miss Brooks has no chance?'

'Well,' said the Captain, self-complacently, 'I believe she is a good deal attached to me, and will feel it a little, but what can a man do? I cannot sacrifice myself to a nature which does not wholly chime

in, amalgamate, assimilate itself, so to speak, with my own. Clotilda Brooks is an excellent creature—excellent in her way, but there is a want of that thrilling of electric chords about her which—a—which, in fact, is an absolute essential to the bliss of the wedded state. Now there is Miss Bodger—Maria Jane Bodger! such soul, such poetry, as are embodied in that young creature! and her fortune is *immense*. I discovered the other day, from her open, confiding father (a fine character, Sir John's!) that she has £50,000. inherited from her mother, and absolutely hers when she comes of age (she is twenty now). I need not assure you it was through no hints on my part that I gained this information; I never dreamt of such a thing. Her father added (with emotion) that she was his only child, and would have all his large fortune besides, unless he married and had children, in which case she should have an equal share, without regard to the £50,000. The idea of the old fellow's marrying was too absurd; I could scarcely help laughing. I shall certainly propose the instant I get to England. And, by-the-way, Harman, you are going home, aren't you, on Friday? I shall send a packet of leaves by you to Miss Bodger, and you can take them to Nightingale Grove, and that will keep me, as it were, alive in her memory—not that I think there is the least chance of my being forgotten—not the least—but it will be a suitable little attention, you know.'

Mr. Harman quite agreed, and undertook and carefully performed the commissions.

Three weeks later than this, on a fine, bright sunny forenoon, Captain Cavendish was riding out to Nightingale Grove, an imposing-looking mansion, with many superfluous chimneys apparently, and much too large for its pleasure-grounds. On ringing the bell, the servants who came to the door, decked in gorgeous liveries, informed him that Sir John was in town, and Miss Bodger and her aunt, Mrs. Hankey, 'was out taking

the hair, they supposed, in the gardening.' So the Captain confided his steed to one of them, and proceeded to explore the premises, and observing a fluttering muslin garment amongst some evergreens, proceeding in an opposite direction from himself, he made such a rush to intercept the bearer thereof that he stumbled up against Grimshaw, the severe maid, whom it proved to be, taking a solemn airing by herself.

'I—I beg your pardon,' stammered the Captain, all confusion and disappointment; 'I thought you were Miss Bodger.'

'I am thankful, sir,' returned Grimshaw, fastening a severe eye upon him, 'that I was *not* my young lady upon such an awkward occasion. My young lady, sir, is delicate; she might have fainted, she might have took hysterics—there is no knowing *what* my young lady might not have done;' and Miss Grimshaw stalked on, leaving the Captain to contemplate all the horrible contingencies which might have arisen out of his late indiscretion. He recovered himself, however, in time to call after her rigid back to ask where her young lady was. 'Miss Bodger,' replied she, without turning round, 'is reclining under a bust of Coepid, amongst the trees on the left.'

'A most suitable situation,' thought the Captain, his spirits rising to the occasion. He very soon found her, with a fat, good-natured aunt seated by her, who retreated after a few minutes' conversation, saying she had a message for one of the gardeners.

Captain Cavendish felt that no time was to be lost. 'Miss Bodger,' said he, in an agitated tone, dropping on one knee—'Maria Jane! if I may venture to call you so—you must long ago have detected the state of my feelings. At Cortina, when the melodious name of Bodger first fell upon my ear, an instinctive feeling told me it was to be interwoven henceforward for ever with my destiny. Your image since then has filled all my heart. I need not describe —'

'No, no! for goodness' sake describe nothing!' cried Maria Jane,

starting up. Bless me! I thought everybody knew that I am engaged—engaged,' she added, with an air of pride, 'to Sir James Harman's eldest son, Mr. Harman, whom we met in the Tyrol.'

'Engaged!' said the Captain, faintly, turning green, and to Harman! Oh, ye gods! Miss Bodger showed symptoms of flight, and the Captain only detained her long enough to swear her to secrecy, and to beg that his horse might be sent down to the gate.

On his way back, murder and suicide, and many black thoughts beside were rampant in the breast of the Captain. He left his horse at the stables, and walked up Bond Street towards Douglas's, for he found nothing so soothing in any perturbation of spirit which might afflict him as having his hair brushed and shampooed at that excellent establishment. On passing Redmayne's shop, he happened to look in, and whom should he see but the Misses Brooks seated before a pile of brilliant silks which were being held up before them by a shopman in all sorts of enticing forms. Quick as lightning the Captain saw his consolation and revenge before him. Clotilda was devoted to him, that he knew, and Harman should see how little his treacherous conduct had affected him; so, quite revived and made a new man of, the Captain entered the shop, and was most graciously received by Clotilda.

'We are engaged this afternoon,' said she, as they were going, 'or I would ask you to come home with us at once; but to-morrow forenoon you must really come early, and tell us all about the rest of your excursion.'

Only too delighted, the Captain took down the number in Upper Brook Street, and escorted the ladies to the door. A magnificent carriage, with pawing chestnuts, was standing at it, and, to his surprise, the ladies got into it, Clotilda smiling sweetly upon him from the window as they drove off.

'By Jove!' said he to himself, as he walked up the street, 'I am in luck; she has evidently succeeded to



an immense fortune. Ah! Harman, my boy, I shall be even with you!

The Captain passed a most blissful evening, very different from what he had expected on his return from Nightingale Grove; and the next morning between eleven and twelve he went to Upper Brook Street. Clotilda was sitting alone in a pretty drawing-room, very handsomely dressed, and glittering with massive gold chains and lockets. On the table lay several new jewel-cases, open, and displaying expensive-looking bracelets and brooches. Every appearance betokened wealth, and the soul of the Captain rejoiced within him.

After some general conversation he began to wax sentimental.

'The Tyrol will always be to me henceforth,' said he, 'encircled by a halo of the fondest memories and most endearing recollections. When a kindred soul is met with in this wilderness-world, Miss Brooks, the place of meeting becomes thenceforth as a kind of Paradise to both. Do you not think so?'

Clotilda cast down her eyes, and murmured, 'Yes. Yet you know, Captain Cavendish, the pleasure was cut short for me, otherwise I could have remained weeks and weeks in that delightful Cortina! It has been too often the case with me, that kind of thing; in fact, as you would yourself observe—

“'Twas ever thus from childhood's hour,  
I've seen my hopes all flee away.”'

(Miss Brooks was never known to make a correct quotation in her life.)

'I never lov'd —'

'Clotilda, is your black moiré to have a high or a low body?' said the *mal à propos* Amelia at this juncture, looking in. ('Good morning, Captain Cavendish.') 'There is a person here from Mrs. Murray's to ask about it.'

'Oh, the stupid creatures!' exclaimed Clotilda, in an anguished tone; 'they will be making mistakes in them all; I must go and speak to the young woman myself. Captain Cavendish, I am so sorry; but could you call another day?'

'May I ask you to spare me half a minute, only half a minute,' said

the Captain, earnestly, for he felt that, after his late experience, delay was dangerous. 'I shall be for ever obliged if you will.'

'Very well,' said Clotilda, rather unwillingly, and a little out of temper. 'Amelia, tell the person to wait; not a thing must be done till I speak to Mrs. Murray myself. Well, Captain Cavendish,' she added, impatiently, and still standing up, as Amelia left the room, 'what is it?'

'Pray be seated, Miss Brooks, for a moment, a mere moment; I shall not detain you. Clotilda, pardon this agitation—you must feel, you must know, that you, and you alone, made the Tyrol a terrestrial Paradise to me! Since then your image has filled this faithful bosom to the exclusion of all else; and I have flown on the wings of love to claim, at the earliest moment possible, the possession of your fair hand. I flatter myself these sentiments were not wholly unknown to you, or wholly unreciprocated by you at Cortina, and a foolish bashfulness alone prevented my giving utterance to them long ago; but —'

'Upon my word!' said Clotilda, very wrathful at the allusions to the Cortina flirtation. 'Your bashfulness, I am sorry to say, has forsaken you at a very unfortunate time. I never thought or cared in the very least to think what your "sentiments" were either here or at Cortina. I never dreamed of your presuming to think of me except as an ordinary acquaintance; and I beg to inform you that I am engaged to Sir John Bodger, and shall be married to that gentleman on the same day on which his daughter marries Mr. Harman. Good morning, Captain Cavendish.'

Let us draw a veil over the rest. The Captain's sensations would be too harrowing a picture to present to the sensitive reader. But, for the comfort of his tender-hearted sympathizers, we must add that his recovery was not long in coming about, and when last heard of he was once more pursuing his 'little game' under an Italian sky, in the salons of Naples and Rome.

L. L.

## LOVE AND PRIDE.

(ILLUSTRATED BY T. MORTEN.)

AND so the door has closed on love,  
 And closed for me on day,  
 And I must now take heart and go  
 Upon my lonely way.  
 For pride stood in the deadly lists,  
 A dark, relentless foe,  
 And stirred the depths of bitterness,  
 To bid my true love go.

And love lies slain upon the field,  
 His death-deep wound I see,  
 But surely his sweet shade will come,  
 To mock my pride and me;  
 To mock us in our wild unrest,  
 And triumph o'er the foe,  
 That stirred the depths of bitterness,  
 To bid my true love go.

To whisper, 'Could thy pride be slain,  
 By me in combat true,  
 The love-light yet might burn again  
 Within thine eye's fond blue.  
 But I am but a ghostly shade,  
 And he my mortal foe,  
 That stirred the depths of bitterness,  
 To bid thy true love go.'



## LOVE AND PRIDE.

(ILLUSTRATION BY T. MONROE.)

A HILL on the shore was dotted with trees,  
 And stood for me the day,  
 And I would now take heart and go  
 Upon my lonely way,  
 The power stood in the deadly hour,  
 A day, something like  
 That would the day of tomorrow,  
 To bid my love love go.

And here the sun, upon the hill,  
 The sun, the sun, the sun,  
 I'm sorry the world shall with me  
 In the sun, the sun, the sun,  
 In the sun, the sun, the sun,  
 And the sun, the sun, the sun,  
 That stood the day of tomorrow,  
 To bid my love love go.

To the sun, 'Tis the sun, the sun,  
 The sun, the sun, the sun,  
 The sun, the sun, the sun,  
 Within the sun, the sun, the sun,  
 And I am not a ghostly shade,  
 And I am not a ghostly shade,  
 That stood the day of tomorrow,  
 To bid my love love go.



Drawn by T. Morton.]

LOVE AND PRIDE.

[See the Poem.]



# THE ANNUAL GATHERING OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



The picture of the people of the United States, as they are, is a picture of a people who are not only the most numerous, but the most powerful, the most civilized, and the most free. The picture of the people of the United States, as they are, is a picture of a people who are not only the most numerous, but the most powerful, the most civilized, and the most free.

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## THE ANNUAL QUESTION—'WHERE SHALL WE GO?'



MATERFAMILIAS PUTS THE ANNUAL QUESTION—'WHERE SHALL WE GO?'

'WE are here to-day and gone to-morrow' is the motto of the Londoner towards the end of July. The reflection that to-morrow never comes puts something of a damper upon those spirits who long to burst through the trammels of society's bondage, and be away over the mountain-top, down in the sunny vale, sailing across the sea—the sea, the ever blue, the fresh, the free! (or words to that effect),—or, in some way or other, breathing a purer atmosphere, than that of foggy, smoky, feverish London.

VOL. VIII.—NO. XLIII.

The necessity of being here to-day wearies us; and the pleasure of sticking up on the door of our chambers, 'Gone to-morrow,' or rather, 'Back in ten minutes,' which simply means absence for an indefinite period, is a feeling, or a conglomeration of feelings, almost indescribable.

Uncertainty is a condition of our mundane existence. We are gone to-morrow. Whither? That is the question, as Hamlet has often observed to the footlights; and that is the inquiry to which the present

G

writer is now about to attempt a satisfactory reply. Experience in the maternal aunt of invention; and as regards our periodical exodus, we, 'wishing to try some new place *this time*,' generally consult divers friends 'concerning the merits of different watering-places, until, lest we should lose the season in perplexing deliberation, we decide, as we have decided twenty times before, upon Brighton. The fact is, thoroughbred Londoners cannot wrench themselves away from beloved London. They may babble of green fields, fresh eggs, larks (in the sky, not in a dish, with bread-crumbs), new milk, (which Londoners are perfectly afraid of when they do see it,) cream (which always disagrees with them), the bracing breezes *on* the hills (catch 'em walking up a hill!) the home-made bread (generally productive of indigestion in a Londoner), and the beautiful garden (of which he knows about as much as a fish would of boots)—but, talk as they will, all these delights must be, as the country-house advertisements say, 'within easy reach of town.' And for this reason down go Londoners to Brighton, well named 'London-super-Mare.'

For the benefit of the readers of this magazine, the editor issued a commission of inquiry, with a view to the timely solution of the annual where-shall-we-go-to difficulty.

The present writer having been most judiciously selected for the post of chief-commissioner, now proceeds to lay before his public and his editor, or *vice versa*, the depositions of such witnesses as he has thought fit to examine.

Extracts from witness's diary with personal explanations, which shall be marked, when necessary, thus, *pers. expl.* :—

'May 20. Came to the determination that we must go "somewhere" this year. "We" means wife and self. Wife suggested Brighton. Said (that is, I said), "Oh, hang Brighton!" Wife said I needn't be so cross about it.

'Myself (*Mr. Bingle.*) Well, but you always suggest Brighton (*which she does—pers. expl.*)

'Mrs. B. (*pettishly.*) Well, then, suggest something better.

'Mr. B. (*posed, is silent and appears absorbed in the newspaper.*)

'May 21. Made up my diary to-night. It seems settled that we are to go to Brighton. I suppose there is some other watering-place besides Brighton. Let me see—why should there be? England is an island. It can't be bounded by Brighton on the north, south, east, and west coasts. Every proposal to go anywhere has, as far as we are concerned for the last five years, resulted in Brighton. What did I say at breakfast this morning? I may note it thus—

'Mr. Bingle (*with a view to mollifying Mrs. Bingle, who he knows has never been beyond Boulogne.*) We might go abroad this year.

'Mrs. B. (*not to be taken in all at once.*) Yes, so you said last year.

'Mr. B. Well, I intended to have gone, I'm sure, last year; but you know—(*stops, foreseeing that he may call up some unpleasant reminiscences.*)

'Mrs. B. (*recalling the unpleasant reminiscences.*) I do know; you went abroad with that what's-hisname.

'Mr. B. (*knowing perfectly well whom she means.*) Who?

'Mrs. B. (*pettishly.*) Oh, you know well enough (*which he does*), Milsom. You're at his beck and call: he can get you to go anywhere.

'Mr. B. (*allowing that there is a certain amount of truth in the charge, but objecting to the phrase used.*) Not at his 'beck and call,' my dear. I thought that a run to Dieppe, and so forth (*he silyly omits Paris*) would benefit my health. You know the doctor said I wanted change.

'Mrs. B. (*returning to her point.*) Well, you might have taken me with you.

'Mr. B. (*with a slight distrust, founded upon experience.*) Nothing would have given me greater pleasure.

'Mrs. B. gives a little incredulous laugh. Mr. B. looks at the newspaper.

'Mr. B. (*drawing a highly-coloured picture.*) Now what I should like to do would be to go by Folkestone to Boulogne, then by rail, without stopping in Paris, as far as Stras-

bourg. (*Here he arrives at the end of his tether, and winds up generally.*) And then we could look about, see what was to be seen, and return by—by—(*forgets the names with which he had intended to impress Mrs. B.*)—by lots of places, and so home.

'Mrs. B. (*liking the idea, and allowing herself to be slightly taken in.*) But what could we do with the children?

'Mr. B. (*who has foreseen this loophole from the first.*) Ah, that's it! We can't take them with us. Fancy a caravan—(*seeing that his wife doesn't enter into the humour of the idea, he fancies the rest to himself, and is much amused.*)

'Mrs. B. (*inspired.*) We might get them a little cottage somewhere, where they'd be perfectly comfortable, and then go away.

'Mr. B. (*with an eye to the probable expenses of such an arrangement, and the certain curtailment of his own personal enjoyment.*) Yes, that wouldn't be a bad notion. But—(*doesn't quite see how to frame an objection*)—but, it's expensive.

'Mrs. B. Oh dear, no; not a bit more than if we were all at Brighton.

'Mr. B. (*dubiously.*) Oh! it would be, though. Besides (*adroitly touching a chord in the maternal heart,*) we shouldn't like to be away so long from our children.

'Mrs. B. (*trying to steel herself.*) Oh! they'd be perfectly happy with nurse. Nurse is very fond of them.

'Mr. B. (*following up his cowardly attack.*) Yes, she is. Why the baby last year, while you were away for a short time, got so fond of her that she wouldn't take to you at all—would she?

'This last hit settled the business, Boulogne, Calais, Amiens, Ronen, Strasbourg, Strasbourg Cathedral, all faded away like a dissolving view, and in their place came Brighton.

'May 25. . . . (*Mr. Bingle's diary for this day was put in and read.*) . . . Settled the matter at last. Brighton is not our destination. We shall try Littlebeach, in Sussex. Somebody dropped in and said, "Why don't you go to Littlebeach?" We looked at one another. The thing was simple enough. Why didn't we go to Littlebeach? We

gave it up, like a riddle. Our friend said, "Littlebeach is the place. Such an air! nice houses; very quiet; sands; no shingle to speak of; soon over at Mowbray Castle." What was Mowbray Castle? "Not know Mowbray Castle! Beautiful grounds, artificial lake, gardens, lawn, keep, band on Sundays, pic-nics, old helmets, spears, hunting-horns, portraits by Holbein and Van Thingummy, you know, in Henry the Eighth's time—ah, no matter—well, portraits of all the old dukes; and stags, deer in the park, and a dairy—beautiful Gothic dairy; stable,—in fact you never saw such a charming place. Oh! you must go and see Mowbray Castle!—but of course you will if you're at Littlebeach." And for children? "Oh! the best place for children. No horses nor carriages; a large green, where they can play about all day without the chance of being run over. Expensive? oh dear, no! if you get your rooms now; but of course, in the season—" "Oh! then there is a season?"

'It is, perhaps, scarcely necessary to remark that it was the male interest that suggested this last inquiry. Littlebeach, however, seemed to accommodate all parties. There was quiet, and rest, and small expense for Paterfamilias (I don't mind speaking of myself under this title, but I do not care about anybody else applying it to me); there was a sort of Happy Hunting-ground for the children, and a Season for the female interest.

'Then said we, with one voice, "Let us decide on Littlebeach;" and so on Littlebeach we accordingly decided.'

Thus far Mr. Bingle's diary, which treats chiefly of his reasons for choosing Littlebeach in preference to any other beach. The Commissioner asked the witness whether Littlebeach came up to his expectations, and whether—which was the important point for the public out of doors—whether he could recommend Littlebeach as one of the best, if not the best watering-place, for a sojourn during the summer and autumn months?

The witness replied that Little-

beach quite came up to his expectations, in fact exceeded them; he begged to explain that he meant in point of expense. If his evidence would be of any service to the public out of doors (though as regards the beach and green those might be enjoyed gratis), or to the public indoors, which was of more importance in the way, for instance, of lodgings, he would be delighted to give it. Might he read extracts from his diary? He might. Very good. Then the public would be able to judge for itself. He would call his extract generally Littlebeach. He would first treat of the geographical position of, and the means of reaching, Littlebeach.

*(Extract from Diary.)*

'Littlebeach is on the Sussex coast. As I've from day to day postponed buying a map I am unable to state exactly where it is. It is not far from Worthing, because I've driven there from Littlebeach, and a lovely drive it is; in fact, I think you pass Worthing in the down-train from London, or pass London in the up-train from Bognor, which stops when there on notice being given by somebody. This is the reminiscence of something in "Bradshaw," but not having his Guide at hand I cannot be certain of my quotation. Littlebeach has no shingle to speak of but plenty of sand: miles of sand. There's a fine green that serves for the children, divided by a gravel-walk that serves for a promenade. There's one row of houses with the advantage of facing the green and the sea, and behind it another row of houses without any advantage at all. The first are very expensive but very fair; the latter, comparatively, more expensive, and, beyond all comparison, very unfair. There is a charming little inn, called the "Beach Hotel," or "The Beach Hotel Inn," as if the proprietor had not yet made up his mind as to the style of his house. I fancy that now Littlebeach has a railway station all to itself (formerly it divided the convenience with Mowbray, inland, where the Castle is), the question is settled, and "inn" is altogether

dropped, as too plebeian. By the way, members of the Roman Catholic body will find a chapel here. They used, the waiter informed me, to have mass said every Sunday morning in a private room of the inn, at 7 A.M., these veritable Early Christians! The Lady of Mowbray Castle is the patroness belonging to the ancient faith. What made me think of this was, that an Established Anglican clergyman keeps a school or takes pupils here, and lives in a beautiful house at the end of the advantageous terrace, and the boys have a capital cricket-field bounded by a low sea-wall of flint. There's no difficulty in getting to Littlebeach when you've once taken your seat in the right carriage. There is a difficulty in finding the right carriage, as some go through and some don't, and both look, to the inexperienced eye, exactly alike. Care must also be taken as to what official you seek out in order to make inquiries. Some officials know a little about it, a few know something less about it, and others know nothing about it. It is safest to consult the last, as they'll set about asking questions of others as much for their own information as for yours. Some guards go all the way, others only go part of the way; neither will be of any service to you: this is my experience.

Moreover, you will do well not to rely upon any information with which the ticket-clerk may furnish you. Observe that when he replies to your question it is with an answer that he has been obliged to obtain from a fellow-clerk, and goodness knows where *he* got it from. The sum of all is, put this and that together, and you'll get comfortably down to Littlebeach. When there, drive at once to the "Beach Hotel," where you will be unable to obtain a room, because they are so full, and so very busy that a waiter can only give you half an answer as he is rushing into one room with the duck, and the other half when he is running out to fetch the green peas that have slipped his memory. The people in the bar will be disinclined to answer you at all, but after some deliberation think it not



improbable that you *may* be able to get lodgings at No. 3, in the advantageous terrace. On the whole, their opinion is against the possibility of your obtaining accommodation anywhere. The improbabilities and impossibilities generally resolve themselves into the landlady managing, somehow or another, to get you something at Mrs. Grigson's cottage, not a hundred yards off, until a family now apparently filling the entire hotel, has departed. You take what you can, and find that, if you'd gone to look for yourself, you could have had a choice of almost any number of rooms (if at the end of May) in the advantageous terrace. Don't take a cottage at Littlebeach, however attractive it may appear, until you have ascertained that there are no draughts, no mice, no rats, that all the windows and doors can be fastened, that the rain won't come in, that the chairs won't break down, that the kitchen range will cook something besides chops, that the sanitary arrangements are satisfactory, that the garden belongs to the temporary tenant, that there is water on the premises, and a few other little matters all more or less tending to the comfort of the lodger. This is for the guidance of the in-door public. I think there is more rain at Littlebeach than anywhere that I know of—at least there was during our stay.

'There is a *dépôt* of soldiers encamped on the other side of the river Mow, which runs into the sea by Littlebeach. These bold *militaires* are very pretty and flashy, in the sun, at a distance, and in the matter of bugling they must have arrived at a greater state of perfection than has any other branch of her gracious Majesty's service. You will get some idea of the delights of Littlebeach from the following very brief notes made in my journal at the time:—

'June 10.—Settled in Mrs. Grigson's cottage. Haven't seen Mrs. Grigson. Boots from the "Beach" showed us in here. Went for a walk on the promenade, while Mrs. Bingle superintended the unpacking. Hate packing and unpacking.

Hate luggage. Ha! there are the soldiers bugling; how delightful it sounds: so mellow. Possibly that's the *réveille*; let me see—it is the *réveille* in the evening, isn't it? or the morning? Both perhaps. I will ask that old gentleman, doubtless an old inhabitant. "Can you inform me, sir, if that is the *réveille*?" I repeat my question, "Can you inform me?" and so forth. He cannot, because, as he explains, he is deaf. I apologise—he doesn't hear me. Deaf men shouldn't be allowed to go out on promenades when bugles are playing. Ah! lovely, boundless ocean! What's the time? Dear me, past nine I declare. In to supper or dinner-supper, for I'm very hungry, and then, after a mild cigar, to-bed.

'9'30.—In Mrs. Grigson's cottage.

"Before supper, I should like to wash my hands. Some hot water?"

—"Is none." "Well then" (being in a good humour, and willing to rough it), "say cold water." "Oh, nonsense, there must be cold water."

—"There isn't." "Oh! I say, come, this won't do."—"Boots said he'd bring some, and he hasn't."

"What do you mean by *bring* some? Why isn't it here? Why, I ask, isn't it here? Good gracious! isn't it enough to make a saint angry? I don't complain without cause, my dear." (This to my wife, who says I do.) "Well, where's the Boots?"

I go off, fuming with rage, to find the Boots. My demeanour, I've been since afraid, was that of a man bound to take Boots' life. I meet Boots on the road; he is coming from the "Beach" laden with pails.

"Where are you going to my pretty maid?"—I mean you—you—Boots?" Words fail me, and I merely call him Boots. Somehow, meeting him seems to calm me down. His explanation, which I am afterwards totally at a loss to understand, does at that moment appear as satisfactory as it possibly can be. I tell him to be sure I have a bath brought to me in the morning. He promises faithfully. I tell him to order supper for me at the "Beach," and I'll come in. I remind him of my bath, and he says it shall be all right. Useful fellow,

Boots. I walk up to the beach; there is bugling again. That sound, I tell my wife, is the réveille. She wants to know what a réveille is. I tell her something on a bugle. She is very curious about it—women are—and I am a little annoyed at being unable to give a correct account of the réveille. It's sounded at night, it's the last call, to bring the soldiers in, or the first call in the morning to get them up; in fact, something of that kind.

'11.—We have had a very comfortable supper, a walk, and a cigar—that is, I have had a cigar on the promenade. We have listened to the sea; we couldn't help that, I imagine. We remarked, that it had quite a mesmeric effect, and we heard the soldiers' bugle in the distance. My wife said that that must be the réveille. I said, "Yes, it must;" but I confess that my mind was not by any means made up on the subject. But there is something so cheering and stirring about a bugle-call. My wife says it's lively to have soldiers about. I think so too.

'11:30.—Bed. Ah! don't want a blind to the window to shut out the sea. I open the window to give one last look at what sort of night it is. Ha! the bugle in the distance as fresh as ever: that must be the réveille. My wife says, "Don't bother!"

'Next Day, 5 A.M.—"Eh! what's that? Oh, the sun. Draw the blind." "Can't—there's not one." One *does* want a blind. "Ha! there's the bugle. Pretty sound. Can't be the réveille." On second thoughts, this is the réveille.

'5:45 A.M.—I've dozed. Ah! how powerful the sun is. I know what I'll do: a towel shall be pinned up before the window. Where's a towel? Where are pins? My wife wishes I'd be quiet. Hang the pins! Catch me trying to stick up a blind again. More bugling. Two bugles, I fancy, at once. Hallo! bugles springing up in different places. What between the sun and the bugles I shall never get to sleep again, and then I shall have a headache.

'6:15.—Bugles and shouting. Sun stronger than ever.

'6:45.—More shouting, less bugling. Sun simply scorching.

'7.—Bugling, shouting, clashing of arms. I shall get up. My wife asks me "Why don't I go and bathe?" I answer, "Because I don't care about it." I'll take up my bath, however, and then—halloo! no bath? Now this is too bad. I told Boots to be particular about my bath—a hip-bath, if he could get one, I said, or any bath. Oh! this won't do. I must go and find Boots. What a row these bugles are making! Don't like too much bugling. They can't wait it.

'7:20.—Met Boots coming from the "Beach" with a large tin pan: this is my bath. He says he quite forgot it; he thought I'd have bathed in the sea. Did he? he had no business to think. I am mollified, however, and he swears it shan't happen again. Bother those soldiers!

'7:45.—Bugles. A small review. Firing, shouting, clashing; headache.

'8:30.—Bugles ought to be abolished; they're a nuisance. There's nothing pretty or stirring in them whatever; except early in the morning, then they're stirring enough. I shall write to the colonel, if there is one.

'Evening.—\* \* \* Yes, I must write to the colonel. Two soldiers, drunken rascals, insulted Mrs. Bingle on the promenade. "My dear Colonel—." No, I'll wait till tomorrow. My wife insists upon my taking notice of it. Women are so impetuous. P'raps the case wasn't so bad as she makes out. My wife says I've no spirit. I say "Oh yes, I have." She requires me to call on the colonel. I undertake to call on the colonel. In my own mind, I fancy that the colonel will take my charge as an insult to his corps, and call me out. Well, I won't fight. Oh! I *must* fight though. I wish my wife wasn't so impetuous. More bugles. Hang the bugles, and the soldiers, and the colonel!

'Day afterwards, 6 A.M.—My wife starts up; some one in the house. "Burglars?" I say "No." I must get up and see. Pooh! it's the bugles that awoke her out of a dream. There is some one in the

garden, though, digging. I ask him what he is doing there. He replies, "Digging." I could have told him that. I tell him to go—he's trespassing. He says he ain't; he adds that he's digging for Mrs. Grigson: talking of Mrs. Grigson as if she was potatoes. It subsequently appears, from his always being all over the place for Mrs. Grigson, that he is in that lady's employ. Bugles, clash, holloaing, shouting, as usual.

'Yes, sir,' said the witness, closing his book of extracts, 'Littlebeach is all bugles, shouting, soldiers, and officious emissaries of Grigson.' What do the out-of-door public say to Littlebeach?

The witness stepped back to say that Mrs. Bingle could recommend Littlebeach 'for the children.'

Mrs. Bingle, who volunteered evidence for the benefit of the married female public out of and in doors, stated that Littlebeach would have been very pleasant but for the Miss Joneses, who dressed so, just as if they were at Brighton, and were always flirting with the officers. You couldn't walk about anywhere but what you came upon a Miss Jones—there were three of them—and an officer. Disgraceful! The clergyman called on her soon after she came, and so did Mrs. Woberts, his wife. Mrs. Woberts was a very jealous woman, they said, and Mr. Woberts was a very handsome man. She hates scandal; but you really couldn't go a step out of your house without being talked about. The things that were said of her behind her back—never mind how she heard them—were disgraceful. Mr. Bingle didn't care, of course not; it didn't matter to him. They might say anything of her they liked, and nasty drunken soldiers might insult her, and trample on her, and then get talking about her at night over the garden rails with the nursemaid. But she wouldn't go again to Littlebeach if she knew it.

This witness, who was in a very excited state, returned to say that she could recommend the place for children, who didn't know any better, and whose parents didn't care about their being neglected;

but it was the last place in the world for giddy nursemaids.

On being asked why, the witness promptly replied, on account of the soldiers, especially the bugler. It was the bugler, she had found out, who had talked over the garden palings.

#### MUTCHBEACH.

Mutchbeach your commissioner visited in person. A delightful place, also on the Sussex coast, beyond Rottingdean, at the foot of the Downs, and about ten miles from Brighton. Mutchbeach is the healthiest place in England. The dogs live up to any age. The labourers at the age of a hundred don't die; they simply walk away over the downs and disappear. The drainage of Mutchbeach is imperfect: this is a drawback. One of these days Mutchbeach will rival Brighton. Your commissioner will never go there *then*. Now the fashionable costume for the out-of-door public—if the public likes to adopt it—is flannel shirt, belt, no braces or waistcoat, light shooting-coat, and a slouching hat. No collars admitted. Mutchbeach possesses an inn. This is a favourite resort in the evening for labourers. The population of Mutchbeach is at the mercy of the butcher. He 'kills' twice a week, and they are obliged to eat whatever he kills. Just for the sake of form, you are asked by your landlady in the morning what you will have; and merely to keep up this ancient ceremony, you say, 'Well, I should like some beef to-day for a change.' Of course you cannot have that, as to-day is Wednesday, and the butcher only kills on Thursday. You do not understand it—you never do—no one does, except, perhaps, the butcher, and you leave it to your landlady. Prawns are plentiful in Mutchbeach, shrimps scarce. There are, if I remember rightly, six lodging-houses—I mean there were; for since Mutchbeach has become a station, I dare say lodgings are in greater request. Mutchbeach is a Cinque-port, though you need not waste time in trying to find its name among the five. Mutchbeach has its own council, its councillors, its prison-house, its court-house,

its privileges, its ceremonies, its Volunteers, and its battery. It was my good fortune to be at Mutchbeach when a prisoner was taken up by the superintendent of the Mutchbeach police. The force consists of four able men, including the superintendent. They are very quiet, unobtrusive sort of characters, including, as before-said, the superintendent. They evidently do not approve of late hours, as they never injure their health by appearing in public after ten o'clock, p.m. This also includes the superintendent.

Well, a prisoner was caught. To the credit of the morality of Mutchbeach, or the discredit of the vigilance of the police, this was the first prisoner that had been caught for three years. No, by the way, he had not been caught, he had given himself up. There was a perfect rejoicing in the town—a jubilee. The gossips were all out chatting at their cottage doors, stable doors, garden gates, or shop doors. What was Ockdon's crime? He had stolen a cabbage from Tottell's garden. What will he get? Prison. But here comes the procession. Up the narrow High Street, and parading all about the town, marching the sinner Ockdon hither and thither in triumph; in this order:—

#### A Herald

(or some sort of official with a wand of office).

The Superintendent of Police (mounted).

The owner of the Stolen Property (also mounted).

His son, aged ten, bearing the Stolen Property.

Some boys not in the procession,

and soon kicked or cuffed out of it.

The Town Councillor, in a gown trimmed with fur.

Somebody else appearing, because there was a spare gown trimmed with fur to be worn.

#### The Jury.

The Town Something or other, with a large book fastened with clasps (probably containing the bye-laws).

One Horse Fly, containing the Three Local Magistrates' (with power of Cinque-port Judges).

The Volunteer Brass Band (playing, with some idea of tune).

The Tradersmen's Band (drums and fife, playing, with no idea of any tune).

Two Policemen.

The Prisoner handcuffed.

Two Policemen.

The Mutchbeach Volunteers.

This imposing array arrived at

the court-house, which was only large enough, unfortunately, to contain the judges, the police, the prisoner, the accuser, and some of the jury; the remainder of the jury, with the general public, got the best view they could of the proceedings through a window in the court-house.

The town councillor was in the middle of a splendid speech, wherein he was enlarging on the heinousness of the dastardly act that had brought John Ockdon before their lordships, when John Ockdon was observed suddenly to hold up three fingers of his right hand. The police were on the alert, should this have been a signal for a rescue. The superintendent held his breath, and grasped his truncheon. At this moment the prosecutor was seen to look at Ockdon's three fingers and shake his head. Amid an intense silence (for even the orator had stopped), Ockdon held up four fingers. Tottell, the accuser, nodded. In another minute the town councillor had the happiness to inform their lordships that this matter had been settled out of court, as Mr. Ockdon had agreed to pay four shillings for the cabbage, and the expenses of the summons. Their lordships informed Mr. Ockdon, the defendant, that he left that court without a stain on his character, as did also Mr. Tottell, the plaintiff; and the procession re-forming, rode and walked triumphantly round the town in the same order as they came, with the exception of the accuser and the quondam prisoner, who now went together, arm-in-arm, a glorious spectacle for all men in general if they could have seen it, and a signal tribute to the justice and moderation of the Mutchbeach code.

Yes, Mutchbeach is a charming old place. Most interesting, most healthy. Over the downs, if you have a horse, you will get a bracing gallop. And, finally, what I say to the public is, Go to Mutchbeach. Its name, perhaps, is not Mutchbeach; but drop a line to the editor; he will communicate with his commissioner, who will have great pleasure in forwarding further particulars about this Cinque-port, and advancing at once the interests of a

People of Mutchbeach

People of Mutchbeach

town and the welfare of an honourable community.

Worthing everybody knows. I prefer mentioning less popular watering-places. There is a queer little place at the mouth of the Thames, Mudeen, where you can go down and play at being at the sea-side.

Scarborough is too far for Londoners, as a rule, but it is as far above Brighton as Mont Blanc is above Primrose Hill. Then there is Weymouth. Better place Weymouth in winter than in summer, because of the hunting. If you do not hunt, of course this is not much of a recommendation. Take a turn up Malvern Hills, and go in for the water and Dr. Gully. There is scenery for you! Or visit the south, and the mouth of the Dart,

Blackpool in Devonshire, Slapton, where the salt and fresh water almost join, or Dawlish, where the mackerel are. There is scenery for you! Such Prussian-blue green crowning the red-stone cliffs! Your commissioner has evidence concerning all these places, and has something else to tell you about how and where to spend your 'out' season. But go where you will, be where you will, do what you like, you will not, for health, economy, and out-of-door simple amusements, beat Mutchbeach. But where is Mutchbeach? say you. Touch the lip of silence and the tip of the nose of 'knowingness' and note these landmarks following:—*Leves and Brighton are within easy reach, and Newhaven is quite close, if you want to go to Dieppe.* Adieu for the present.

## PALL MALL IN PARIS.

'VOUS n'avez rien à déclarer?'

Such is the first welcome that a paternal government, mindful of the Octroi, addresses to the stranger on his arrival within the barriers of Paris. Such, too, is the question that rises in the mind of every intelligent reader who takes up an article on that ever-delightful but over-described city. Am I condemned to wade through several columns of the ordinary luggage, or shall I find here something novel or perhaps even something contraband? And if, on the first page, the traveller assures that he has nothing but the commonplace old clothes with which so many lay-figures have been dressed up, and perhaps a Murray's guide-book and a map, the reader dismisses the following pages with the douanier's remark:

'C'est bien; on n'ouvrira que celui-ci,' and so passes on to the next article.

Well, I have something to declare.

I declare that I have no description of Paris to give. For that, including its population, policemen, climate, and latitude I must refer to any encyclopædia. Practically, the Tuileries are exactly (in green)

what the Green Park is in brown; the Rue de Rivoli is like Piccadilly, and the Place de la Concorde is nothing more than Charing Cross. Still less have I any monuments. I no more go to the Louvre in Paris than I do to the British Museum in London; and I should as soon think of going up the Colonne Vendôme as of ascending the lying Monument on Fish-street-hill. Not but what I have done all of these things, but it was in the days when I used to eat jam-tarts and cram useful knowledge. I have seen both the Elgin Marbles and Napoleon's cocked-hat; and so, no doubt, has the reader. Therefore peace to them! Send the children there, but don't take us with them. Nor have I any studies of human nature, which is alike all the world over. Freddy in Pall Mall, and Lady Mena Maltire in the 'Ladies' Mile', are much the same as Alphonse in the Faubourg St. Honoré, and La Marquise de Pomponne at Longchamps; the same springs of action, the same hopes and fears move them; and very likely the same *modiste* or tailor dresses them both.

'Still,' says the douanier reader as he turns over the leaves of my lug-



gaze—'still there are points of difference between things in Paris and things in London.' Exactly so. The *sergent-de-ville* wears a cocked-hat and sword instead of a helmet and truncheon; the climate of Paris includes a sun among its arrangements, instead of coal-fires; Alphonse and Lady Mena have a less perfect notion of dressing themselves than Freddy and Madame de Pomponne. And it is precisely these small differences with which I am concerned. Besides these, too, I have one or two notions which by the tariff are usually prohibited. A wholesome horror of my fellow-countrymen anywhere else than in our common country; a timid doubt whether, after all, the British nation is [the greatest and grandest in the world; and a firm conviction that the Marquise de Pomponne is prettier than Lady Mena are among them. Do not seize them, dear *douanier*—they are only for my own use. Take the duty of disbelief on them if you will, skip them, overlook them, and so chalk my trunks and let me go on.

How pleased Madame Coqueluche is to see me! She has prepared the best room in the *Hôtel Coqueluche* for me, she says, the room *au quadrême*, overlooking the Tuileries; and the trees are so green, and the nightingales have begun to sing in the evenings—and the races begin next Monday; and I must eat a *bonne soupe* after my journey. And I have really grown—Madame Coqueluche always winds up so, to insinuate that she finds it impossible to believe I am more than eighteen. 'Monsieur est si blond,' she says, by way of a good reason; and she makes my youth and inferred innocence a justification for the affectionate interest she always takes in me. Still, somehow or other, I always get put on the fourth floor, in a very small room; and in the bottom of my heart I know that Madame Coqueluche makes the same sort of speech, varied according to the circumstances of each case, to every one of her guests. But what then? She does it with such a grace, and such a charming air of sincerity, that I am persuaded she looks upon me as

her son; and for worlds I would not disillusionize myself. She is very fat, and very forty; but when she smiles there are two such dimples in her cheeks, and her little black eyes and bright teeth light up her face so pleasantly, that she is quite fascinating. How different from my landlady in St. James's Street, who is simply a gaunt and sour embodiment of rent, and who has never smiled upon me since the night I had four bachelor friends to supper, who smoked and sang till three o'clock in the morning!

The neat-handed, long-aproned waiters of the *Café Mazarin* are also very pleased to see me. Their form of flattery is to believe that I am a Frenchman. They never offer me a 'bifteck' or the 'Times,' but remind me that I am known to them, by suggesting that I have been '*en voyage*,' and without further question bring me my accustomed half-bottle of Burgundy and the 'Sport' newspaper. This breakfast-hour I count one of my pleasantest times; and as I sit in the doorway, eating my Chateaubriand, and watch the passers-by, I idly wonder why in London we have but the one meal of dinner (for of course the cup of tea and musty egg swallowed at nine o'clock are not worthy the name of meal); and I conclude it must arise from the desire of Englishmen to eat and drink a great deal more than is good for them, which can only well be done once a day—whence mornings of starvation and evenings of repletion. But how delighted I am to escape from the system, and to add to the enjoyments of life my breakfast on the boulevard at eleven o'clock, and to sit out afterwards in the sun, over the morning weed and the 'Constitutionnel!'

We all know, for the 'Times' has told us, that the French press is not free. The 'Saturday Review' even says that it is 'gagged,' and both (for once) agree, with truly British modesty, in offering up a thanksgiving that they are so much more noble and independent than their neighbours. Well, I confess there is less thunder and more fireworks in the Paris press, a less persistent abuse of all other opinions than their own; certainly, too, less news



and more invention. But all this concerns me not. The French government is very hospitable to me; it keeps up the Bois de Boulogne, plants trees, waters the Champs Elysées all day long, and plays fountains through the heat of the afternoon for me; and I do not much care if it is not abused every morning by a free press. In all things that do concern me, I prefer the French to the English prints. I find in them, intelligent criticism on plays and acting, quite as much law and crime as I care to read, and accounts of the races in intelligible language; and if the leaders seem to be under the suspicion of having too implicit a belief in the infallibility of the imperial government, and the desirability of investing in the 'Emprunt Mexicain,' I know exactly in what way to make the allowance, which is much more than I do with the 'Times.' Then I have the 'feuilleton,' to amuse me and remind me that fiction as well as fact should have a part in daily life, and I have, too, those fascinating '*faits divers*,' little *revelés* pleasantly spiced, relating how 'Le sieur X. was engaged in roofing a house, when his foot slipped and he fell with all his tools into the lap of a lady who happened to be passing,' and who, of course, turned out to be his mother, recently returned from a successful speculation in Australia.

Walking along, thinking of all these things, I am stopped by a crowd, and recognize a common phase of Parisian life which I should like to recommend to Mr. William Cowper. I have seen somewhere that the man who plants an acorn is a benefactor to his species; but here in Paris they plant the oak itself thirty feet high, roots and all, and a proportionate quantity of earth, all of which is brought over the hole prepared to receive it, on a huge framework, and lowered down into its place with ropes and pulleys. Just think, after that, of the wretched shrubs that do duty as trees at the Horticultural Gardens!

Nothing is perfect. Among several things I could name, one is the Parisian theory of driving. It is

aggravating enough to see everything on the wrong side of the road; but that is not all. To hold the reins at the extreme end, with any amount of slack flapping about the horse's flanks; to let them go altogether upon the first appearance of danger; to shout a great deal; to serpentine along straight roads and turn imaginary corners where no corners are; and to ignore the existence of foot-passengers altogether, appear to be the leading articles of the coachman's belief; and I declare that I would as soon think of crossing the line at Clapham Junction, with all the up and down expresses ten minutes overdue, as the Champs Elysées on a fine afternoon. The riding is even worse, but its peculiarities are perhaps attributable to the use of ferocious, long spurs, which, as the cavalier turns his toes well out, would probably meet somewhere inside the horse but for the fact that the leg is pointed as much as possible to the horizon: the effect of all which is that the rider has no grip whatever; and should he venture upon anything faster than a walk performs evolutions exactly similar to those of the clay figures sometimes seen perched on the top of a fountain. What would become of him over a stiff fence Heaven only knows! And yet there is among the *gandins* a rampant Anglomaniac which, beginning with pale ale, has gone through bulldogs and grooms, and now shows itself in nothing more than in the violent 'hossiness' with which they have all been seized. Racing, betting, and the driving of drags reign pre-eminent in all conversation; and the report of a successful trial of 'Fille de l'Air' is received with as much interest as a rehearsal of the 'Africaine' with the ballet. But 'Le Sport' is as yet but a forced plant. The trainers and the jockeys are English to a man, so, too, are many of the horses; and the language of Racine and La Rochefoucauld has been enriched, for want of native terms, with all the stable slang of Newmarket and Yorkshire. What has the Académie Française to say to such substantives as 'un stepper,' or 'un handicappeur,' I should like

to know? The race-meetings, too, wear an air more of pleasure than of business; and 'Le Sport' always contains a detailed description of the ladies' dresses at the Spring meetings in the Bois. Fancy 'Bell's Life' on tulle and striped petticoats! Then the Ring has a diletante air about it; and it is remarkable that instead of the repeated offers of 'I'll bet against the field—3 to 1 I'll lay,' the noise here is made up of questions, 'Combien contre Grabuge?' 'Combien contre Thickure?' ('The Cure' so called). Indeed most of those who wish to risk their money do so in 'poules' or sweepstakes; and there is even a company which drives down a smart drag on to the course, unships both ends, and makes of it the office of an 'Agence des Poules,' where any one can buy a ticket for 5*fr.*, and take his chance of winning perhaps 30*fr.*, a small way of gambling much to the taste of the Frenchman.

Another feature of the racing is the admiration for steeple-chases, to which the course at La Marche is entirely devoted, with a 'river,' hedges, walls, and other delights wherever gentlemen riders love to disport themselves.

But who is this, so chocolate and trim in her attire, and so covered over with embroidery and tassels? She has a somewhat dark and swarthy, but yet a most pleasant face, with largish, hardy features, such as are, according to the quality of expression the owner can manage to throw into them, either positively repulsive or supremely fascinating. She carries a bouquet of roses; she has a smile for every one (nearly), and blesses the more fortunate by pinning a flower in their buttonhole. This is Isabelle, the bouquetière of the Jockey Club, the universal toast and the excuse for many an extra bottle of *cliquot* consumed in her honour. She is irresistible, she is divine, she is the rage; but I discover first, by observation, that her smiles are only for the more solvable part of the company; and secondly, by experience, that her roses cost five francs each. She is reported to be well off, and to have her name

inscribed in the 'grand livre' opposite to a goodly amount of rentes. A rival bouquetière once appeared, smaller and prettier, and altogether more engaging, but Isabelle had a pitched battle with her; weight carried the day, and she has reigned undisputed over the coats of the *gandins* ever since.

The railways are a sad trial to anybody who believes in the value of time. The booking-office is closed five minutes before the train starts, exactly the interval at which it is generally opened in England. One result of that on the *Chemin de fer de l'Ouest*, was to keep me waiting an hour for the next train at the Ville d'Avray station, when returning from La Marche. I should have been bored probably, but for the presence of two gendarmes attached to the station, one tall, thin, and desponding, the other short, fat, and sanguine, who quarrelled over the best advice to give to myself, and some other belated travellers.

'Messieurs pourraient prendre des voitures,' said the fat one.

'Ils n'en arriveraient que plus tard,' said the other.

'Cependant ils vont bon train.'

'Puisque je te dis qu'il n'y en a pas.'

'Mais si il y en a.'

'Fiche-moi donc la paix.' And so the thin one got the best of it, and we all waited, and of course I was late for dinner; my host was in a bad temper, and being so, never offered to produce the 1836 Chateau-Yquem for which alone I had dined with him.

Another remarkable feature of the races, astounding enough to the more experienced of Londoners, who pick out their old dust coats and superannuated bonnets to go down to the Derby, is that they are recognized as the great theatres for the display of the fashions. How perfectly the French word expresses the charm of dress! 'Une fraîche toilette.' Does it not conjure up ideas of a dear little pink and white face peeping out from a wealth of virgin cambric and gossamer tissues unprofaned? True that you and I know it to owe its charms mainly to *blanc-de-perle* and starch, but what then? We still prefer it to the dusty velvet and unidealized

shawl of our dear tasteless old England. I notice too, for the first time this year, that all Frenchwomen of a certain elegance, were born with auburn hair, which it is whispered argues a world of passion in the possessor; sequins or steel spangles are in favour, too, worn on the head. A tendency to wear bonnets like elaborated handkerchiefs tied round the top of the head, is perhaps attributable to the fact, that the chignon has been promoted so far towards the crown that no room has been left for a back to the bonnet; and the traditions of the first Empire bear fruits (literally) on the heads and sometimes on the breasts of the fair leaders of popular fashionable opinion. Then there are the *excentriques*, at the head of whom stands the Princesse de Metternich, whom I see driving up like a whirlwind with her yellow postillions. These ladies carry bouquets of roses, and nodding diamonds fixed on the end of long wires, wear birds' nests on their alabaster shoulders, or cover themselves, as her Christian Majesty of Spain has just done, with little dogs. They are all dressed by the genius of Monsieur Worth, a gentleman of Swedish origin, formerly assistant in a well-known West-end haberdasher's, but whom native genius has now raised to be Pontifex Maximus over the rites of dressing. Happy Worth! The lovely Madame de Pomponne, whom to see in striped cotton and highlows would render me sleepless for a fortnight, goes to him dressed within an inch of her life, and with that inch Worth deals in the spirit of an artist. He walks round her, he makes her advance towards him (the dog), and suggests the place of a flower; he seats her in an arm-chair, and cavils at one fold of the skirt; on a sofa, and condemns another; he considers her from different points of view, and decides whether her shoulders will bear another half a centimètre scooped out behind; he etherializes her waist and dignifies her train; he has visions; he retires within himself, and throws off hurried and hardy sketches upon paper; and when

Madame de Pomponne retires, she is clothed no longer in a dress, but in a poem. And to think that such is Worth's life all day long!

The spirit of the French nation is essentially feminine. Fineness of perception, delicacy of touch, and a belief in ideas are their virtues. The men are even more feminine than the women, and the only reason the Frenchman doesn't dress well is, that he has not manliness to enable him to wear his clothes creditably. Even the finest of *gandins* dressed, as he generally is, from London by Mr. Poole, is a failure. There is a shocking insincerity in the varied colours of his waistcoat; a want of courage in the length of his coat; an insipidity about his hat; and withal so much effeminacy in his cloth gaiters, and childishness in the floating ends of his necktie, that the admirer of the manly virtues turns away saddened and sorrowing. For, indeed, the object of male dress should be, not colour and adornment, but a simplicity and frankness such as are proper

'To give the world assurance of a man.'

But how can one expect a human creature to dress properly, whose idea of amusement is a ride to the Bois in a *huit-ressorts*, who wears a cache-nez in winter, and who washes his face with milk (and no soap) in summer, to preserve his complexion?

The idea of a man amusing himself by working hard, and making himself hot, is unintelligible to the *gandin*. And yet Paris is not deficient in means for taking manly exercise. There is a splendid tennis-court in the Champs Elysées, but it is supported almost entirely by the English Embassy and visitors. There is Triat's gymnasium too, a perfect wilderness of scientific ropes, poles, bars, and trapezes; but the frequenters of the place are nine out of ten, men who have been ordered a course of gymnastics by the doctor—the exception being Englishmen, who alone think of doing such things for pleasure. Poor Alphonse has used himself up in precocious debauches, of various descriptions,

much too soon to have that superabundant energy that takes pleasure in feats of strength and courage; and he looks with wonder on the savage Islander who delights in the daily hard work of the gymnase, and loves to risk his neck in the 'saut périlleux,' merely for the pleasure of conquering a difficulty. I am afraid that the whole course of Alphonse's life, with its early scenes of heartless intrigue, its feverish craving for ever fresh excitement, its prodigality and luxury, and its after scenes of costly and fictitious passions, mercenary cocottes, ruinous baccarat, and an old age beginning at thirty, lonely and unloved—I say I fear all this is not very wholesome. Not perhaps so wholesome even as our own duller prosaic tea-drinking life in England. It is the old inevitable law—'Ce n'est pas tous les jours fête et le lendemain dimanche.'

A sad sight that of the Morgue! There on the stone slab lay the swollen body of a young man, with the long curling fair hair and blonde moustache matted and clogged with the mud of the Seine, the eyes closed, the mouth clenched together as with the last resolute look into the water, the long white arms lying straight and stiff by his side. There was a helpless, pitiful look in those arms, that struck me to the heart; they seemed silently to appeal to the crowd as it came and went, for the loved one who once had felt their embrace. People of all sorts passed in and out careless, but it remained there mute and appealing. He had been in life what is called a gentleman, his clothes hanging over his head showed that, so did his hands and feet, small and delicate. There he was, helpless, and no one knew him. Suddenly I heard a scream; a lady had fainted. She was young, beautiful, had come alone, and on entering, had fallen senseless before the glass. The officials came and took her into another room quietly, for they were used to such scenes. Poor girl! It was the often-told, but ever-new story. She loved him; he loved her not. He had ruined himself for one who was not

worthy so much as to wipe the dust from her shoes. He had played, had lost, and had cut short all further history by this desperate remedy.

Such is Parisian life! alternating, as my thoughts do, between deep agonizing tragedy and side-splitting comedy. Let us change the scene.

The broad difference I find between the theatres in London and in Paris is this: that in Paris I go to be amused by the actors, in London to amuse myself with them. Naturally there are bad pieces in Paris; 'La Biche au bois,' for instance, relies as much upon scenery, and as little upon the author, as the pantomime at Drury Lane, and the dresses have diminished in covering-power and increased in ornamentation to an extent even beyond the example of Astley's Mazeppa. But it is a pregnant and sufficient illustration of the general difference of principle upon which things theatrical are conducted in the two capitals, to say that all the more important carpentering and machinery for the unparalleled effects are procured by the Parisian managers from London, while for authors and pieces the London manager has to send to Paris. How proud it should make us to think that we excel in carpentering!

But come with me to the Gymnase, and the doubt you have brought from home, whether men of intellect ever do write plays, or actors of intelligence play them, shall be resolved. Victorien Sardou has written 'Les Vieux Garçons,' and the gentlemen and ladies whose habits and speech he so faithfully presents are played by Lafont, Lesneur, Clairmont, and Delaporte, like ladies and gentlemen, and not like the flippant counter-jumpers and dressed-up ladies-maids, who figure for such in England. They can even sit and talk sparkling dialogue through a whole scene without ever a blunder-buss being fired, or even a funny groom being introduced into the drawing-room (in boots and corduroys) to keep up the flagging interest of the audience; and Lafont

no more strains to 'make points,' than you and I do when we are saying our clever things to be agreeable in polite society. The main plot consists simply of a bachelor being crossed in his unprincipled attempts at intrigue, partly by the innocence of one of his intended victims, and partly by the discovery that his more honourable rival is his own son; but the different phases through which the action passes are so strong in touching situations, the treatment of the whole so delicate, and the acting of Lafont and Mademoiselle Delaporte, especially in the scene in which she meets his libertine insolence with her *naïveté* and ignorance of evil, so full of fine touches and artistic feeling, that to the London playgoer it comes like a new sensation.

Then there is 'La Belle Hélène,' an Opéra-bouffe, which has already become classical; whence it must be supposed that there are still to be found (in Paris at least), audiences who prefer a cleverly-constructed and well-written piece, with original music, even to a burlesque overlaid with the most aged and respectable collection of puns, and fitted with the most hacknied and vulgar airs of the music-halls. Is there no English Offenbach? Have we not, too, a Meilhac and a Halévy? Surely Mr. Burnand and Mr. Frederic Clay might take our destitute case into their consideration—if it were only to relieve us from the necessity of serving an apprenticeship at the Canterbury Hall and the Christy Minstrels, in order to appreciate the songs of 'Ixion.' When, the morning after going to the Variétés, one finds the 'Ronde des Rois,' and the 'Jugement de Paris' running in one's head (as all Offenbach's airs do), one is not humiliated by finding that they are songs of six months ago to all the butcher-boys of the town, who by that time have some other favourite air, which in six months more one will hear in some other burlesque. And Madame Schneider, too, has such unexpected touches of comic acting, taking one, as it were, by assault of impudence; and though she labours under the imputation

of being *tant soit peu canaille*, plays her somewhat hazardous scenes with Paris with such abandon and such irresistible *entrain* (I wish I could find two English words to express myself with), that there is not a man in the house who does not wish that he himself were the 'berger naïf.' The characters are all strongly marked, from the grasping Calchas, great augur of Jupiter, who complains that there are 'too many flowers' among the offerings of the people, to Ajax Premier, whose ill-timed remarks are ever the occasion of his being 'sat upon' by all the other personages of the piece. And though there is no ballet, blue fire, or transformation-scene, not only does one see the piece with delight, and remember it with pleasure, but one can even read it alone in one's room with enjoyment. Try to do that with a British burlesque, and mark the consequence.

The most really moral piece (under the most apparently immoral form) I have seen this year in Paris, is the 'Joies de l'Amour,' at the Palais Royal; for it shows vice to be ridiculous, and so fastens upon it a shame it never feels from being only shown to be odious. And to all those fast young men who are so foolish as to despise the old respectable ways of their own society, for the blandishments of the *demi-monde*, I would recommend the attentive study of a piece which will show them what dupes they are made: but if they learn wisdom from it I shall be astonished. Even more popular than all these, is Mademoiselle Thérèse, a singer at the Alcazar café chantant. Why there is such a rage for her I could never imagine, except it be that she has a voice like a coachman, hands like a porter, and features certainly not remarkable for beauty. But she is eminently Parisian—began life by singing about the Boulevards for a chance sou; has a good heart: and so the Parisians adore her, name cigarette-papers after her, and read her 'Mémoires,' which, after the present fashion of great minds, she has written herself, in order to take the bread out of the mouth of the pro-



fessional biographer, who only embalms his subject when it is dead. Not only that, but she has been made a play of—twice; and offering, as she does, very salient points for imitation, was probably 'well put upon the stage.' Finally, the *grand monde* has taken her up, and has her to its soirées to sing the 'Sapeur' and the 'Gardense d'Ours,' at the rate of 1000 francs each: and that extraordinary society, the Jockey Club, was supposed to have invented the most graceful tribute of praise, when they invited her to sing during one of their gambling orgies, and at the end presented her with all the winnings; by which ingenious device the losers took their revenge, and Thérèse was adequately gratified. But how pleased the winners must have been, who paid for all!

'L'Africaine' is a success, in spite of the third act, and Don Pedro's real gun-brig of the period, which will neither wear nor stay, and takes three quarters of an hour to get under weigh. But the fourth act contains the gem of the opera—a lovely duet between Vasco da Gama and Sélika (admirably sung by Naudin and Marie Saxe), and proves, besides, that the dusky Queen of Madagascar had adopted free-trade, at any rate, in ballet-dancers, a troupe of which, pink and white and lovely, and in *remparts de gaze*, execute a ballet as unmistakably imported from Paris as the fair creatures who dance it. Vasco di Gama must have been struck by it; and Mr. Darwin is strengthened in his views as to the 'common origin' theory as applied to dancing. The fatal Mancenillier, or Upas-tree of the fifth act, bears fruit, too, in the death of Sélika; and the ritournelle there sung is said to be one of the very finest efforts of Meyerbeer's genius.

'C'est de l'ancienne histoire,' says the reader. True; but now let me whisper an historic doubt or two—whether, for instance, some of the cutting in the third act (for it has been cut, although the opera lasts five hours) would not have been more judiciously done by the great master himself than by M. Fétis.

Whether some of the more brutal part of the audience do not go away, on the whole, with the impression that they have experienced a somewhat laborious pleasure; and, finally, whether there is not here and there, among the more bilious critics, the shadow of a reaction against the vast enthusiasm with which the great work has been surrounded—but these must be those who cannot understand it. All I can say for myself is, that if we can get Mr. Gye to give it us in London, I shall be there for the first note of the overture, and shall go out and dine at Epitaur's during the evolutions of the gun-brig, to return in a proper frame of mind for the fourth and fifth acts.

We dine later in London than in Paris. In fact, I think we do everything later, which I attribute to the fact that we came later into society than the Parisians. We were dining at two and three o'clock in the afternoon, at the period when they were having their *petits soupers* under the Régence, ending at two or three o'clock in the morning; and we have both gradually got later since, through the influence of the unpunctual people who always go to everything half an hour behind the fixed time; the effect of which is, that, while we have only brought our dinner-hour down to eight o'clock in the evening, they have got through the night, and brought theirs down to six o'clock the next day. People 'come in in the evening' at eight o'clock in Paris, or go to the Comédie Française at seven without an effort; while in London, to get to Covent Garden for more than the last act of any opera, not only makes dining out impossible, but upsets the life of the whole day, by pushing every operation, from lunch to dressing, back a couple of hours.

Parisians complain of the distances in London. I can only attribute that to the inexplicable mania they have for seeing such things as the Thames Tunnel and the London Docks. Practically, the distances in Paris are much greater; for as everybody, in every city, lives within a certain area, the question



resolves itself into that of the size of the area. My experience is, that eighteenpence and twenty minutes will take me to any place I ever want to go to in London; for of course I have never seen the Thames Tunnel—heaven preserve me from it! and Prince's Gate is the farthest point I ever reach—and never even that under an invitation to dinner; But in Paris, I find that the Bois is always three miles one way from me, and the Gymnase three miles another. Above all, the hansom—that one redeeming feature of the nineteenth century—does not exist there; and the system of payment of the fiacre is so ingenious, that it is to the interest of the driver to make the 'course' last as long as possible, in order to get his extra 25 centimes—a fact which, no doubt, lies at the bottom of most of the irreligion, and all of the bad language of Young France; and, in fact, it is very difficult to keep within the bounds of parliamentary speech with the *cochers*, who have no vestige of respect for the superior classes, for the simple reason that no French class believes in the existence of a superior to itself; and it is instructive to notice the difference of the form in which the cabman and the *cocher* show their discontent with what they consider inadequate remuneration. The *cocher* simply grumbles as man to man, and reasons thus:

'Ah ça! Mais il me faut encore dix sous.'

'Pourquoi?'

'La course était longue.'

The passenger hints that it is exactly the length of the journey, and the slow rate of travelling, that he objects to.

'On ne peut pas éventrer son cheval. Allez-vous-en la faire en moins de temps.'

But the final argument of the British cabby, although he sometimes begins in a strain of fine sarcasm, by asking, 'Here! wot d'ye call this 'ere?'—or by disdainfully remarking that 'A shillin' ain't no good to me!'—is always this, 'Do you call yourself a gentleman?'

And if you could but convince him that you not only called yourself a gentleman, but were a *marquis*, he would go off contented with sixpence less than his fare; not, however, having the Peerage with you, you either pamper him with another shilling, or else go away crushed down into the class of *snobs*, whom he despises infinitely more than you do yourself.

Altogether, that which strikes an Englishman, is the strong republican tone of feeling which runs through all French society, and which has not only kept all its vitality under the Imperial form of government, but has given a novel—and sometimes almost a comic turn—to the form of government itself.

At the root of all lies that unflinching logic of the French mind that reasons on everything, questions everything, and, being never satisfied with anything, has in it the seeds of perpetual change of all things. Well, we stupid Islanders are very different with all our patched-up old institutions and monstrous 'anomalies;' but when I think over the woes, and the sin and suffering through which this lovely land of France has gone, in its single-minded and noble yearning after Reason and Truth, and then turn and see our own sleepy and pig-headed happiness, I come back to London with something like a feeling of thankfulness that the English are not a reasonable people.

T. G. B.



## VIENNA SOCIETY.

**I**N the following pages, we propose to lead our readers into the inner life of a town seldom trodden by the English tourist—in winter; at least, the season when 'society,' as in most continental towns, is at its height. The rich city merchant who determines to give himself and his family a three-months' holiday in the winter time, or the retired country tradesman, may be met with at every corner in Rome or Naples. Those bent upon society, find the Napoleonist saloons, and even those of the 'Faubourg St. Germain' in Paris, easier of access than the exclusive circles of Vienna. No foreigner, except of known character and rank, or well recommended by his ambassador, can hope to gain admittance into the 'Haute Volée.' Amongst themselves, the strictest rules prevail. No one who has not sixteen perfect quarterings is admitted. Perhaps it will be as well to explain the system of 'sixteen quarterings' now. It is generally admitted that each person has a father and a mother—two parents, exceptions only prove a rule, Macduff and Minerva are the only ones we remember at this moment;—this degree constitutes two quarterings; that is, the son or daughter quarter their (the parents') arms on his or her shield; well, each of these had a father and mother, therefore the original individual has two grandfathers and two grandmothers—four quarterings. This is bringing the explanation to the level of the lowest capacity. Therefore each of these has two parents, eight ancestors in the third generation, and sixteen in the fourth. Now, each single individual of these sixteen must have borne arms—that is, must have had no connection whatever with trade, must have belonged to the gentry, in fact. Any flaw in any part of the chain destroys the whole of the quarterings. Jews are, on this account, never seen in the best houses of Vienna. The branch of the Rothschild family living here, though holding a fair and honourable

position, is never admitted into society. Having explained the groundwork of our theme, we shall now conduct our readers some eight hundred miles from 'London Society' (with which they are already acquainted), into the heart of the capital of the Austrian empire.

The first object of an Englishman, on entering a foreign town, is always to find out the best hotel. The two rivals in Vienna are the 'Erzherzog Carl,' *vulgo*, Archduke Charles, and the Munsch, known in Congress days as 'the White Swan.' They stand on exactly opposite sides of the narrow and busy 'Kärnthner Strasse;' the former, however, possesses the advantage of not forming a thoroughfare like the Munsch. In Vienna, namely, the visitor will constantly observe passages leading under archways into the court of a house or houses, and then break out again; these are termed 'voluntary passages,' or, in the harsh Teutonic, 'Freiwillige Durchgänge.' Whether this name arises from every one being at liberty to pass, or that there is no strict right of way, and that the passage is granted by the proprietors (like the passage at the bottom of 'Hay Hill,' between Devonshire and Lansdowne Houses, which is shut one day in every year, on the 1st of September, we believe), we are unable to state; however that may be, they are all closed at ten p.m. Having selected one of these hotels, or one of the many others, the traveller will most likely begin to look about him, unless he finds snow of three feet in depth a drawback. However, as our object is rather to lead him into society, we will say nothing about the town at present, excepting as its description tallies with our project. As we have said before, the unaided Englishman, even of the best family, will find it very difficult—nay, almost impossible—to gain admittance into the charmed circle, unless he have some previously-made acquaintances therein, or be furnished with letters of intro-

duction; however, having once burst the barrier, his progress will be rapid, for nothing can be more cordial than the behaviour of the Austrians and Hungarians to a foreigner; indeed, it has been said that to know one Hungarian was to know the whole nation. Last season was unfortunately a rather dull one, as the gloom of death hung over the court and many noble houses. The Emperor's uncle died in December, and the Esterhazy, the first Hungarian house in Vienna, had experienced the loss of a sister and aunt. The season here, where the natives do not care about broiling themselves half dead as in England, begins properly on, or the day after Twelfth-day, the 6th of January, and lasts, with the exception of Fridays in each week, when dancing is prohibited, till midnight on Shrove Tuesday, when everything ceases. This period is called the 'Fasching'; its length, therefore, always varies with the date of Easter Sunday. If this be early, the season begins again in a modified manner afterwards, but the 'season' proper only lasts during Carnival—a term, of course, derived from 'farewell to meat,' that being, theoretically, prohibited during Lent. We must begin with the highest pinnacle of society, the Court. No foreigner has any chance of ever seeing a 'Kammer Ball,' since foreign ambassadors, though representing their sovereigns' persons, are excluded; only those nobles who 'enjoy the Emperor's confidence' are invited, and the families of military personages attached to the court, with the dignitaries of State, if possessed of sixteen quarterings. We believe Schmerling, the first lord of the treasury, to be excluded on this account, but will not sign an affidavit on the subject. The papal nuncio, however, is admitted; and as, from his position as Roman Catholic ecclesiastic, he may not even look on dancing, the privilege, no doubt, affords him great gratification. The Bavarian minister, who represents the head of the empress's family, has also the *entrée*. Foreigners are, however, admitted to the 'Court' balls, properly so

called. The 'R. & I. Redouten Saal,' in the palace, where these balls are given, is a most magnificent room, about four times the size of the Throne-room in St. James' Palace, and it is always most brilliantly illuminated, on these and similar occasions, with wax candles. A balcony runs right round the room, at about half its height, from whence those who do not dance may see all the fun. An annual ball is held here, by permission of the Emperor, of a curiously characteristic nature, called the 'Bürger Ball,' or 'citizen's ball.' In Vienna all classes, trades, and occupations form themselves into 'Vereine,' answering in some respects to our guilds, excepting that we have no theatrical or 'fourth-estate' guild, whereas here there are such. All these different associations give one ball during the carnival; but only the Bürger and Industrial Society's balls are given in the palace. At the former all the wealthy citizens, who never are admitted into society, have the privilege of gazing at the empress, whose radiant beauty even surpasses that of her sister, the queen of Naples. The imperial party always visit the ball-room, and sit for an hour or so in the royal box on the balcony. The 'Industriellen Ball' is given by a committee of the artistic manufacturers. Tickets are obtained to these balls, on payment, by sending in your card to the committee. Here actresses and authors, telegraph clerks and merchants' daughters jostle each other in gay confusion. We observed 'Couqui,' the *prima ballerina* of the opera, surrounded by a legion of admirers, all with more or less stars on their breasts, walking along on the arm of the admirer with most decorations, whilst a rich old banker, H—, followed her steps, looking something like an ugly lapdog with its hair dyed, carrying her shawl and fan. The dancing is carried on to the inspiring strains of Strauss' band. It struck us once, as a remarkable fact, that this band was always advertised to play at least in three different places on the same night, and always under the personal superintendence of

Strauss. If asked on this point, he (Strauss) might have objected, like the Irish M.P., that 'I can't be in two places at once—like a bird!' However, there are now three brothers—John, Edward, and Joseph, though only the two last lead; and these two were always advertised together. To see the elder of these two lead is really a sight refreshing to behold. His whole frame regularly keeps time to the music; far different from the unimpassioned demeanour of the estimable C. Coote, senior, whose band, for dancing purposes, is perhaps as good. During the waltzes and other fast dances, the ladies all stand together in a wide circle round the room, and the gentlemen form an inner circle about three yards off. When the music strikes up, the first gentleman walks across this space to his partner, and then dances round between the ladies and gentlemen, each successive couple going off in the same manner immediately: when they have completed one turn, they are stopped by the M. C. Thus no dancers pass each other, and order is preserved in a manner which would astonish the crowded confusion of a London ball-room, where the area of a child's hoop is considered quite space enough to dance in. In the cotillon, which was danced at the middle of the ball, and not at the end, as in England, only one figure was danced, which consisted of all the ladies—there might have been 500—joining hands, and the gentlemen ditto. Then the ladies were led through the circle of gentlemen, in rows; and at the end, the scramble for partners was amusing to behold from the gallery. The supper-room is not good—a low, mean-looking place, where you sit down and pay for what you take. There is another smaller ball-room adjoining this one, called the small 'Redouten Saal,' in which are given 'Gesellschafts Bälle,' or Society-balls, every fortnight. They are also termed 'Pick-nic' balls; on what principle it is difficult to make out, unless it be that balls are given by night, and pic-nics by day. ('Lucas,' &c.) These answer in some degree

to our almost forgotten Almack's, tickets being obtainable through lady patronesses only. The proceeds are devoted to a charitable purpose. The society of these balls is very good, the military element preponderating greatly amongst the gentlemen, as, indeed, it does on most public occasions in Vienna. The variety of uniforms, however, gives a gay appearance to the ball-room, very unlike that of a London ball-room, where the gentlemen all give a foreigner the idea of being undertakers in a new line of business, and turned butlers. At the 'pic-nics' the dancers are not restricted to a line, but the room is never overcrowded. Prince Auersperg gave a ball in his large house, outside the inner town, to which the Court came and stayed about two hours. A magnificent marble flight of steps leads up to the drawing-rooms here. One of the rooms formed a large conservatory, which, though doubtless charming in summer, was much too cold to be entered in January. One of the many excellent military bands played the music. Polkas and Mazurkas are very favourite dances; but the Lancers are hardly ever heard of. The masked balls form a most prominent feature in the entertainments of Vienna. One Sunday we counted twenty-three balls advertised in one paper for that evening! To these, however, ladies never go, the female element being largely supplied out of the *société équivoque* of Vienna. Many elegant masks are to be seen at these balls; however, the 'Debardeur' element predominates largely; and higher flights of fancy were seldom attained, for fear of verging into the political, which is strictly prohibited. No gentlemen mask; and only some four or five men, who were paid to appear as pierrots, enlivened the rooms with dreary facetiousness, consisting chiefly in hitting each other on the head with flexible wands that they all carry. The balls at the 'Teater an der Wien,' that took place every Wednesday, were the best. The pit and stalls were boarded over, and the stage turned into a room, the bands being placed in the gallery. Twice a week

large masked balls were given at the Diana and Sophien Bäder—baths in summer, ball-rooms in winter—really magnificent rooms; we have nothing to compare to them, as ball-rooms, in London. In the latter, Strauss and a military band played alternately, leaving hardly any pause between the pieces. It was the Strauss brothers' custom to produce a new waltz at every guild ball, with an appropriate name. So, at the 'Bürger Ball,' 'Bürger Sinn' was produced. At all these places smoking was supposed to be prohibited, but was nevertheless indulged in, as on English railways. 'Sperl' and 'Schwender's Colosseum' were two other ball-rooms of a lower order, both with two separate dancing-rooms, and both magnificent in their proportions. Each of these establishments held three balls each week. The latter answers, in summer, to our Cremorne, and is about the same distance from Vienna as that from the West End. After midnight, masks were generally laid aside; and the general beauty then visible was certainly only second to London loveliness, and far above that of any other European capital, though we cannot speak of that of St. Petersburg, not having seen it. To conclude our list of dancing establishments indulged in by Vienna society, we must mention those of the dancing-masters. Each of these, about six, gave small *soirées* about twice a week, not excluding Fridays, to which it was not unusual for the 'best young men' to go.

The hours of dining are much earlier than in England. We consider ourselves lucky if we sit down by nine o'clock; but in Vienna half-past five is the latest ever achieved in private society. The system of tables d'hôte does not obtain here, and therefore those not invited to a private dinner have to partake of that meal unsociably by themselves, unless, as is more usual, several friends agree to dine together at whatever hotel they may choose; as is almost always the case abroad, the gentlemen leave the table with the ladies, and the conversation is never prolonged, as they all hurry

off to the Opera or theatres, which begin at seven. The opera is always sung in German during the season, and is not generally blest with any first-rate singers, though Herr Wachtel, of the high chest, and Fräulein Ilma von Muraka, who has appeared in London this season, sang, and very beautifully. The ballets, however, which are given twice a week, and often varied, are charming, chiefly owing to the delightful dancing of Couqui, who seems, on the stage, the very incarnation of grace. Perhaps Ferraris and Mouravieff danced as well, but Couqui is a worthy competitor to either of them. Herr Frappart, also, was always excellent in comic ballets. They occupy the whole evening; about ten different ones were given during the course of last season, one being entitled, 'The Chimney Sweeps of London' in which all the sweeps wore dresses with yellow facings; another was founded on 'Monte Christo,' but, unlike the play taken from the same celebrated novel, which was so long as to take two nights to act, was over at half-past nine, the usual time for the close of the various performances. The 'Carl Theater' is the amusing theatre of Vienna, nothing but light vaudevilles, farces, and operettas being given. 'La belle Hélène,' of Offenbach was produced here almost contemporaneously with Paris. The audience part of this theatre is a perfect half-circle, and the dress circle is more fashionable than the stalls. Most of the theatres have, however, an institution they call the 'Fremdenloge,' or foreigners' box, into which they admit any one to a separate seat, at a slightly higher rate than to the stalls. At the latter end of the season a French company made its appearance at the 'Wien,' but the attendance there was the reverse of encouraging.

The majority of the educated classes speak English, but they will always talk German to you if they perceive that you prefer exercising yourself in that language; unlike a Frenchman who, if he does happen to know ten words of English—a rare achievement—insists on making



himself unintelligible to you in it for the rest of the evening.

After the theatres, the men generally go off to the club, here called, rather bumpingly, 'Das adelige Casino,' or aristocratic club; it is, however, an extremely select one, the election being by ballot, and admittance can only be gained by a foreigner through the intervention of his ambassador, or, as was the case when we were in Vienna, Lord Bloomfield being absent, that of the *Chargé d'Affaires*, who at that time was Mr. Bonar, a fine specimen of an English gentleman. The rooms are large and lofty, and fitted up in the English style, with solid chairs covered with leather, &c.; a large billiard and card room takes up nearly half the first floor of the palace (we forget its name), in which it is situated. The billiard-tables are the French ones, without pockets; the chief game being the simple cannoning one. Here a good dinner may be obtained from four to seven. Smoking is allowed in all the rooms except the reading-room, which, indeed, is one of the smallest, the social German not caring very much for literature when here. After having met their friends here, the gentlemen generally go off to the parties that may be held on that evening. The foreign minister, Count Mensdorff Pouilly, held receptions every Friday, where all the society might be met with, the lady of the house receiving at her drawing-room door as in England. The beauty of the higher orders is not to be compared with that of the lower classes in Vienna, as regards the gentler sex. In walking through the town, the stranger cannot help being struck every moment by the beauty of the women. As regards the men, the features of the higher classes are cast in a greatly superior mould. The fashionable walk and drive of the Viennese, answering to Hyde Park, is the famous Prater; at Madrid the same institution is called 'El Prado.' In the depth of winter this looks very cold and bleak, with snow lying all round about three feet deep, the trees all leafless. It consists of a large wood, extending from

about a mile outside the town down to the larger branch of the Danube, with one straight road, the fashionable drive and walk, cut through it. It is, however, by no means too thickly planted with trees, and must be very lovely in summer; numerous coffee-houses were scattered up and down by the sides of the road, but all shut up. Here many sledges were seen, but they are hardly ever used in the town itself, though we saw one man driving a sledge, standing up and holding on by the reins! One of the dictates of fashion here is, that you must never be seen sitting in a one-horse fly; this is *infra dig.* It might sound arbitrary and dictatorial to a London ear, where our highest ambition is a 'hansom;' but in Vienna the two-horse cab rather, if anything, preponderate over the one-horse vehicles. The pace they drive at is terrific, and there was always one old woman, at least, driven over daily, in the papers. The omnibuses look like relics out of the good old times, so mediæval are they in appearance, though perfectly modern, in fact: they have a sort of double *coupé* in front and a section of omnibus behind, with one or two seats by the driver. The cabbies of Vienna sustain the reputation of their kind for mother-wit, but unlike (?) their London 'co-drivers,' they are not invariably civil. The principal tailor, Gunkel, only deals in English cloth, and makes his garments after the last approved Poole patterns, charging, however, Vienna prices, that is, if we suppose them to be considerably more than those of London. Skating is a very frequent amusement before the snow falls, and the piece of water in the 'Volk's Garten' was always crowded after midday; more adventurous spirits find fine sheets of ice for their purpose in the Prater. The zoological gardens are also situated in this Prater, but the social Sunday gatherings have not come into fashion, at least in winter. In the 'Volk's Garten,' Strauss gives a concert every Sunday and holiday during Carnival, in a sort of hybrid establishment, half hothouse, half restaurant, where the approved, and,



indeed, only obtainable refreshment is 'melange,' a villanous compound of, apparently, coffee, sugar, milk, and yolk of egg. One fine afternoon whilst we were there, the only waiter for about three hundred people, upset a tray of about a dozen 'melanges' over the back of an unoffending auditor. We must not forget one of the most important institutions of the capital of Austria, the 'Café Daum': here generals and subalterns, members of the Reichsrath of every party, actors and authors, young diplomats, government clerks of every description come together to take their punch, beer, or coffee after the theatre; or rather each set has its own hours for meeting, its own tables and circle. The game of billiards goes on in another room, whose atmosphere resembles that of an aggravated London fog, though of better odour, tobacco. Every class, from the duke to the cabman, who hastily imbibes his coffee in one of the small adjoining rooms, is to be met with here. It used to be the custom for all Austrians to 'look in' at 'Daum's' before going home, however late they might have been staying at a ball or anywhere else; they were always sure of finding some one they knew, and of hearing something neat, as, whenever anybody hears an authentic or unauthentic piece of news, his first idea is to run off to Daum's and retail it. Reputations are made and marred in this exteriorly humble-looking place; every secret is 'let out' here; this is the duck-pond from whence rise all Vienna *canards*. By the way, we suppose that 'shooting folly flying' is an euphemism for 'bringing down a canard.' However, these pages are not 'Notes and Queries,' and we resume; the seconds in any duel consult together in a corner, and the result is first noised about here. Indeed, the 'Café Daum' is the lion's mouth of Vienna. Some of our facts about this locality we gather from a novel, entitled 'Die Theaterprinzessin,' by Frederick Uhl, a Viennese writer, who has certainly succeeded in this work. About 10 P.M. is the time when Daum is

most crowded: then all the different and often conflicting opinions on the last new singer, or the newly-arrived tragedian have fair play, and the verdict of success or failure is passed. Ladies seldom enter the doors of Daum. The 'Times' is taken in for the benefit of any stray Englishman, who, however, will find himself, if alone, rather out of his element. The noise occasioned by about fifty people, all talking at the same time with vivacity, at different tables, must, we should think, be even louder than that to be heard within the 'ladies' parliament,' whenever that meets. The confirmed playgoer, on entering and taking his seat at the table of his 'set,' always answers the question immediately put to him about the performance, by talking of 'our theatre.' Supposing the acting of a particular comedian to be in debate, he will say something in this way, 'Ohi Knaak' (of the Carl theatre, *c. g.*) 'was delightful this evening. He gave a perfectly new colouring to the sixteenth repartee in the eighth scene of the second act.' However, we think we have lingered quite long enough within the precincts of 'Daum,' whose amiable proprietor walks from one table to the other, looking after his guests, and sometimes sitting down at one of their circles; so to conclude our disgracefully long paper, we should recommend all those having a regard for their pockets not to adventure into the 'Graben,' the widest and best-stocked-with-shops street in Vienna, for if they do they will certainly be tempted to enter one of the many 'splendid emporiums,' as our American step-brothers say; if so they will not be able to tear themselves away without buying more of the lovely little knicknacks than they can possibly want. Klein's shop is one of the most tempting of these. The Vienna taste in small articles for presents or the writing-table and boudoir is exquisite. He must be a strongminded individual who can resist these manifold temptations. But now we must take leave of Vienna and of our readers.

## Types of English Beauty.

### NO. VI.—LADY MARY.

SWEET Lady Mary, hitherto our song  
Has been of girlish beauty's maiden dower.  
Now, matron fair, those lovely buds among,  
We sing of thee, the bloom and perfect flower.

They that love Spring may chant its young delight  
Hearts more mature the Summer season suits;  
But we the calm deep happiness recite  
Of bounteous Autumn with her store of fruits.

Oh, nobly thoughtful face, wherein we trace  
The charm of wife and mother, ripe in thee:—  
We see thee crowning with transmitted grace  
The golden heads that cluster round thy knee,

Or making earth twice blest for him who holds  
Thy heart's rich treasure, garnered all for him  
So to his breast his peerless wife he folds,  
With lips that love makes dumb, and eyes tear-dim.

Like the long evening lingering of the light,  
Thy presence gilds his home with deep repose,  
Making his life so peaceful and so bright  
That only heaven can be its fitting close!

Oh, type of matron beauty, English-born,  
Thy praise to speak in vain our language strives:  
Thine is the crown by loveliest virtue worn,  
Thou the Home Angel hallowing our lives!

## 'FAITHFUL AND TRUE.'

## A Tale in Three Parts.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'GRASP YOUR NETTLE.'

## PART I.

IT was an ideal day for a pic-nic; warm but not sultry, bright but not glaring, breezy and not windy; the very day of all the three hundred and sixty-five for the prize fête of the season. Charley Dunn said that he had 'ordered it expressly for the occasion, having spoken to his friend the clerk of the weather up there,' an announcement which was received, as it always is, with a burst of laughter that very foolish announcement as if something witty had been said. But then Charley Dunn was privileged; a 'chartered libertine' he used to call himself, spreading out his arms for butterfly wings; and it was one of the canons of the society in which he lived to believe in his wit, and accept his sayings as of the finest quality of humour. He was, in fact, the crowned Punch of the Brough-Bridge community; though, to do him justice, his bâton was made only of pasteboard and hurt no one's knuckles; and as he wore his pinchbeck gracefully, and gave himself no airs of sovereignty, society felt no special call to drop the tinsel into the smelting pot for the purpose of testing the residuum of gold at the bottom. So that when he talked nonsense about the weather to-day, and laid himself out to do his part of the general entertainment with more than ordinary energy, every one was open-mouthed with anticipation, and perfectly sure that the sunshine and Charley Dunn could 'beat even fate and the enemy,' whatever that might mean.

They made a pleasant party on the whole, though there was the usual admixture of the 'doubtful element'—the old maids, starched matrons, and stiff-backed 'propriety men,' who have always to be asked on such occasions, and who are always so frightfully sure to come. There was, first, the little group of

confessed aristocrats, the first-class people of the place, headed by old Lady Scratchley, third cousin to a duke in her own right, and widow of a ruined baronet, but who might have been own sister to the queen, and the deposed occupant of a principality, for the amount of condescension and fallen grandeur that she displayed; and by her side, as polite and courtly as though she were a lady of the bedchamber doing homage to a sovereign (this was to show the second class what court manners and the aristocracy were like), was Miss Le Jeune, of the good old county family—a little decayed now unhappily, and no longer possessing the original seat. She was a lady of a certain age, with a high nose, thin lips, and straight eyebrows, who laid immeasurable stress on blood and had a lofty contempt for 'mere money'—money got by trade being her especial aversion. With her was tall and slender auburn-haired Miss Turnbull, her niece, 'whose father was unfortunately only a younger son, but a man of family and quite thoroughbred' that meaning, if translated into the vernacular, 'as poor as a rat, and too proud and lazy to work.' Wherefore, on the strength of her gentleness, Annie Turnbull went about the world with her head tossed up to the clouds; though, to be sure, the blue forget-me-nots in her bonnet were of the 'poorest style of artificial flower known,' as Lady Scratchley's confidential maid remarked, just a trifle disdainfully. But then she had good blood in her veins, which every one has not, and so had a right to toss up her head, and look for a Prince Florimel at the very least. Also, in the same group stood Miss Grandville, a deceased dean's daughter, who talked ecclesiastical architecture, and took it as

a personal affront if any one expressed Low Church opinions in her presence—a handsome young woman, but stiff and reserved, fraternising only with the *Le Jeunes*, and even that not too cordially. The flowery-wigged old lady was too light-minded for her, and exacted too much subserviency; and Miss Grandville felt it due to herself, as the representative of the ecclesiastical power, to stand on her rights, and rather demand respect from the secular power than pay it. For which reason she and my Lady Scratchley were generally at arms' length, and hated one another heartily.

The gentlemen flanking this little cotario were Admiral Price, a monkey-faced old sailor with not too many brains; Whiting Fox, the retired diplomatist, and his son, young Mr. Whiting Fox, down from the Home Office on his leave; Colonel Badger and Captain Turbotte: all of them, save the young Home Office Adonis, elderly, unmarried (bachelors or widowers), and ineligible. Close to this small knot of exclusives stood the three Miss Globbs and their four brothers; a tall, large-limbed, well-developed family, with loud voices, a clear enunciation, and decided leanings to the muscular side of Christian living. They were more than a little fast, these young people; but good-hearted enough, and with no very dangerous propensities; still, there the taint was; and though they were general favourites, it was under protest, and 'what a pity it is' always added to their names. But as no one could deny their good-nature, or the inherent innocence of their natures, they came at last to be as well known for 'chartered libertinism' as Charley Dunn himself, and with as complete immunity from untoward consequences. They always had a long following of penniless cornets and young collegians not yet come to their estates, and not likely to do so; charming men, but not of the marrying order; and party givers who knew them took care to leave a tolerable margin for contingencies: so that, when they came to-day, accompanied by

four or five 'useful men,' it was only what was expected, and no one was surprised.

Then there was Miss Moss, the oriental-looking belle of Cheltenham for a season; to whom tradition and ill-natured gossip assigned an earlier patronymic than that which she bore now, and her brother, young Abraham Moss, if anything more decidedly oriental than herself: and these two young people were the cleverest and most entertaining of the company. And there were the two Miss Hawtreys from London, who played and sang themselves into society everywhere, but whose parents and kinsfolk were mythical and of quite unknown condition: and pretty, affected, sentimental Mary Douthwaite; and bluff Margaret Wood—her friends called her Maggie, and a few Maggie Lauder—who spoke her mind to every one, and did not in the least care whose toes she trod on. There were several more; young men of varying fortunes and very varying features; young ladies of less distinctly-marked individuality—some strangers whom no one of the old set knew, and who did not know each other: and then there were the staid married couples of a certain age to give a sanction and consistency to the whole.

'Must have veal pie and logs of lamb before we come to the sweets!' said Charley Dunn in an apologetic kind of way, defending his administration to the young ladies. And among them were Mr. Samuel Harmer Hunter, the giver of the picnic, standing near to Mr. and Mrs. St John, little Georgie Fenton's half-sister and her husband. And then there was little Georgie herself, and papa's private secretary, young Mr. Roger Lewin.

Mrs. St John, a black-eyed, sharp-faced little woman, was many years older than little Georgie; old enough indeed, to have been her mother, though she would have been very much disgusted had any one said so in her hearing, being of those who are jealous of the revelations of time, and who insist on juvenility to the last day of their lives. And being so much

older, it was but natural that she should exercise a maternal kind of control over her young sister, whose mother had died when the little one was born, poor thing! though, as Georgie used to say with tears in her pretty eyes, and some show of reason, 'she need not be always so cross, and treat me so like a naughty child. I am nineteen now, and surely ought to know how to behave!'

Which was in reference chiefly to Mrs. St. John's expression of grave displeasure—excited even to that point of wrath which culminated in boxing her young sister's ears—when she found her in the great drawing-room playing chess alone with Mr. Roger Lewin, 'only a private secretary' if you will, but a dangerous young man enough in the eyes of an elder sister careful about settlements, and inimical to portionless love.

Mrs. St. John had no very strict acquaintance with love in any of its aspects, being one of the hard sort, as her maid used to say, with no sympathies or affections that had not a substantial bearing. She was an energetic little busybody who must interfere in every one's concerns, but never to good or kindliness; a conceited, sharp-tempered, restless, and essentially vulgar woman—her very manners, indeed, being not of the smooth and undulating character belonging to her order, but spiky where they were not angular; very worldly withal, and anxious that no one connected with her should walk in any path, social or spiritual, of which she had not first set the boundaries and trodden down the causeway. Her present great object was to marry sister Georgie to Mr. Samuel Harmer Hunter, a well-conditioned, not ill-looking, and very wealthy iron merchant from the Black Country: a little older than Georgie, certainly (he was fifty-one last birthday), but still a fine figure of a man, and bearing his years bravely. Besides, 'it is better to be an old man's darling than a young man's slave,' was Mrs. St. John's perpetual commentary, when that obstructive clause was mentioned as a thing material to the question. Nothing

was wanting for the consummation of her wishes but the young lady's own consent, and this she refused to give; though her sister talked to her by the hour together; and Mr. St. John clinched her every argument with 'Just so, Georgie; do as your sister tells you;' and though sleepy, irascible, weak-minded old papa lent his influence, too, to the same side (when daughter Carry was by), telling Georgie that she might 'go farther and fare worse,' and sometimes advising her, for him, quite strenuously; but promising, being a kind-hearted old man, if passionate, and very fond of his young daughter, that he would not force her if she did not consent of her own free will. And that was quite as much grace as little Georgie could expect.

Thus matters stood when Charley Dunn persuaded Mr. Samuel Harmer Hunter to give a picnic to all the gentry round about Brough Bridge, as the best means of making himself popular; which, as a new comer, who had made his money in trade, he found some difficulty in perfecting. For the Brough Bridge people prided themselves on their gentility; and even the very poorest of the admirals and the colonels and the withered 'scions of nobility,' as platform orators call them, publicly disdained the pretensions to equality of a retired iron merchant from the Black Country, however rich he was; though, to do them justice, all the mothers with single daughters, and all the single daughters themselves, made up their private blandishments for what was wanting in cordial social recognition; and every one knew that their disdain was a mere pretence, and that each and all abandoned their order when that order was out of sight. Like the augurs of Rome, they could scarcely look into each other's faces with gravity, when the 'd disabilities' of Mr. Hunter were discussed over their meagre teas; exclusive, if meagre.

Mr. Hunter being a reticent, self-sustained, rather thick-skinned man, cared little for all this. He knew quite well what time and money do in the long run; so he bided his



time, spent his money, and left the issue to the kindly dews and genial rains ever favouring the good seed. Thesequel proved his wisdom. When he and Charley Dunn (Charley was his right-hand man) sent out their invitations to a grand picnic to be held at Harrow-field-side, every person in the place accepted: and the muster on the Oaks lawn, where they all assembled before starting, numbered seventy-five and a half, Charley counting old Trouncer, the Newfoundland, as the half. Seventy-five, including not only the *élite* of Brough Bridge and its neighbourhood, but also many of the 'second class'—those dwellers on the debatable land of gentility, always to be found in a community. And to have floated these down was even a greater triumph than to have flung himself on to the crest of the wave. If Georgie Fenton would have only said 'Yes,' Mr. Hunter's cup of pride and happiness would have been filled to the brim.

It was not only the retired iron merchant who thought the young daughter of the retired banker, in her fresh light muslin and coquettish hat, the prettiest girl, and the most charming, of the assembly; many others shared his opinion. Charley Dunn himself, though by no means apt to be 'spooney' on any girl, and more inclined to adore all than to love one—even he was a trifle troubled by her—just a shade more serious towards her than towards the rest; and if he had had twopence-halfpenny a year, he used to say—'unfortunately, he had only twopence-farthing'—he might have felt inclined to commit himself to matrimony and misery for the rest of his life. But besides these two, and the half-dozen unattached, putting out their feelers everywhere, like shrimps or sea-anemones, for unknown food, there was Roger Fenton, to whom Miss Lewin (he was obliged to be respectful, being only the private secretary) was simply the realization of his womanly ideal, and the one sole beloved of his life. If Georgie thought the same of him for her own part, it was no wonder; for he was a handsome young fellow to

look at; and of a fine and noble character; steadfast, unselfish, generous, and reliable; stern to men and loving to women, as all women desire of their hero; and one whose word, and power of endurance—that patience of courage—could be trusted to any extent. He was a man with whom women instinctively felt 'safe,' which adjective expresses all that they most love and revere.

All being assembled then on the lawn, the question now was, how should they go to Harrow-field-side? and, who should take who? Charley Dunn, who knew the unrecorded wishes of half the young men and of all the girls, mated and marshalled them to the best of his power and the plasticity of circumstance; putting himself to unheard-of straits in his endeavour to please everybody, wherein he generally succeeded. However, ill or well, he did it, which was something accomplished: packing them up in separate parcels according to such pleasant admixture as he deemed best for the society at large, as well as for the service of the individual. And now there remained only Miss Le Jeune and Miss Annie—who, because they were well born, were very careful of their company, and inexorable on the score of chaperonage—the St. Johns and little Georgie, Mr. Hunter, Roger Lewin, and himself:—eight people, four and four, to share in a phaeton and a dog-cart. It was Mr. Hunter's design that the St. Johns and the Le Jeunes should go in the phaeton, driven by Charley Dunn or Roger Lewin, both of whom were good whips, and that he would drive Miss Georgiana over in the dog-cart; an arrangement to which Charley, for his part, had consented with a good grace, thinking it only fair that the host should do what he liked best for himself, and that if he 'chose to tool over Miss Little one pretty one, why shouldn't he? He paid his money and he took his choice: and he was a lucky dog that he had money to pay, and a clever one for the choice he made.' Charley did not go on to say that he, and half a score more, would have chosen the very same thing.



He had tact enough to keep that to himself. So the last party stood on the lawn in the sunlight, waiting for the final arrangements; and of the four men standing there, three were in love with the same woman: and one was beloved.

And now a new complication arose. Annie and Miss Le Jeune, seeing the turn things were taking, warmly protested against the arrangement proposed. They would have neither Charley nor Roger for the charioteer of their precious lives. The one was so flighty—they called him mercurial, which had a grander sound—he would miss the right turning, or upset them in the ditch, or turn them out over the hedge; the other was better certainly, but he was not experienced enough—the horses would run away, or they would come down, or they would have a fit, or faint, said Miss Annie pathetically; horses did faint very often in the hot weather, poor things! or they would break their knees or something; and Mr. Roger Lewin, though a charming young man, would not know what to do if there was an accident; and accidents so easily happen, you know, without blame to any one. So they set themselves in decided opposition, and talked and coaxed and insisted till they finally carried their point, and Mr. Hunter found himself obliged to yield to instances which had at least this flattering assurance, that both ladies thought him sufficiently worthy to be trusted with valuable cargo.

Mrs. St. John took no part in the discussion; neither did little Georgie; unless, indeed, that might be called taking a part which was simply looking up at Roger Lewin once, and saying in a low voice, 'You drive me,' as they stood a little apart: she digging round holes in the lawn with her parasol, and he arranging the lash of a whip which he held in his hand. But when the pretty arguing had ceased, and Mr. Hunter had yielded with a very blank face—'I think the arrangement a very good one,' then, said Mrs. St. John, 'we four ladies in the phaeton, and Mr. Hunter and

Mr. St. John on the box. Mr. Lewin and Mr. Dunn can break each other's necks in the dog-cart.' Mr. Hunter's face brightened. He would have rubbed his hands if he had dared; as it was, he gave a small unmelodious chuckle, and clumsily rubbed his chin.

'Oh, no, Carry!' said Georgie hastily. 'I want to go in the dog-cart. I hate sitting with my back to the horses—you know I do.'

'You shall sit on the box, then, with Mr. Hunter, and St. John shall come inside,' suggested Mrs. St. John amiably.

Miss Le Jeune and Miss Annie looked at each other, and a smile, not at all of the kind poets call honied, crisped up their lips like vinegar.

'Rather an extraordinary place for a young lady, is it not?' said Miss Le Jeune coldly.

'Oh! in the country one doesn't mind a little relaxing of the reins,' said Mrs. St. John very tranquilly.

'I can drive Miss Fenton over in the dog-cart,' then said Roger Lewin, coming forward with his steady cheery air, as if he had been the possessor of half a million, and not 'only the private secretary, my dear.' 'Mr. Dunn can sit behind and keep guard; and you know,' smiling and tossing up his bright brown hair, with a very pardonable affectation of modesty, 'I am not a very despicable whip—at least not for one horse.' (He was the best in the whole country side.) 'Don't you think my plan the best, Mr. Hunter?' he continued: 'it disposes of a great many difficulties.'

'By far the best,' said Miss Le Jeune quite warmly.

'So nice for Miss Fenton in the dog-cart!' said Miss Annie as if she envied her.

'Absurd! impracticable!' exclaimed Mrs. St. John in her high voice; and, 'I confess I had not contemplated this arrangement,' chimed in Mr. Hunter, speaking slowly, and evidently displeased.

'What would Miss Georgie herself like?' said Charley good-naturedly. He was always thoughtful of her, and put her pleasures beyond and above most social laws;

and then he hated a fawn, and dread 'hitches' in a day's enjoyment. 'That shall decide it, Hunter, shall it not? We are all arguing as to the custody of Miss Georgie, without giving her a voice, and I call that shabby!'

'If it is left to me, I should prefer to go in the dog-cart with Mr. Dunn and Mr. Lewin,' said Georgie hastily, but with a deep blush.

Mr. Hunter bowed, rallying himself so far as to say, a little grumpily, though he did his best to look graceful, 'You are the queen, Miss Fenton, and have only to command your worshippers.'

And again Miss Le Jeune and Miss Annie looked at each other, and smiled crisply.

'Your father shall hear of this, Miss,' whispered Mrs. St. John, grasping her arm as she passed so savagely that the red marks could be seen quite plainly through the muslin. But Georgie was too happy to be resentful. She was young and in love, and the present moment was her all, and the future might never come; so she took no notice of the spiteful pinch, but only answered coaxingly, 'Don't be angry, Carry, dear,' as she jumped into the dog-cart briskly. And then the most radiant and innocently-loving little face in the world turned like a sunbeam upon the heavier party in the phaeton, and a shower of smiles and nods and handwavings followed them so long as they were in sight, as they rattled off into the summer lane of trees and wild flowers.

'She will be obliged to me, at all events, for yielding to her wishes,' said Mr. Hunter in a musing way to Mr. St. John on the box beside him. (Miss Annie had put in a faint claim for the place, but Mrs. St. John had out-manceuvred her, without leaving her a chance.) Mr. St. John held his peace: he could have said too much.

'Thank you, Roger, dear Roger!' said little Georgie simply, laying her hand on his arm as they drove off—the phaeton was now out of sight.

Roger Lewin looked at her, as she said this; a look of such infl-

nite tenderness, and the man's intensity of love, that Charley Dunn, who just then turned round on the back seat to speak to them, comprehended the situation in an instant, and knew the secret which had been kept so religiously between them for six weeks or more.

'By Jove!' said Charley to himself, and he turned quite cold for a moment, 'this is awkward.'

'What else could I have done?' said Roger to her softly. 'It was a bold thing to brave your sister so openly, but it had to come. It has to come in real earnest, you know, Georgie dearest, sooner or later, if we would be true or happy.'

'Yes, but still it was so good of you!' repeated Georgie fervently. 'For I know that you felt for me more than for yourself, and that it was to release and please me you came forward and upset them all.'

'And not to please myself at all?' returned Roger, with a lover's smile. 'I am afraid I am not quite so unselfish, little darling, as you would make me out; and that if I thought of your pleasure a little, I thought a great deal of my own.'

'Oh! that is the old argument, you naughty boy!' said Georgie, laughing and blushing.

'Which one? we have so many! The argument as to which loves the other best, or who will hold out the longest?'

She did not answer this, but looked up at him shyly, and yet with so much frankness in her love, if with maiden bashfulness in the expression of it, that it needed all Roger's self-command not to put his arm round her waist and kiss her in the face of the sun and Charley. Why should he not? he thought. She was his, so far as love and plighted troth could make her; why should he not confess the love she had given him, and claim both recognition and fulfilment? But wiser counsels prevailed, and Roger did nothing of so expressive a nature that it could never be glossed over again. He only took her small and pleasant hand, and pressed it up against his heart.

The drive was very delightful, at least to two out of the three, for

Charley had not much share in the fun, as he phrased it. Knowing what was expected of him he discreetly kept his eyes and his tongue to himself; too well versed in the art and mystery of his normal character, that of 'playing gooseberry,' not to be aware that, before they had driven half a mile, if he would only efface himself they would have forgotten his very existence in the fulness of their content. As it proved. Wrapped up in the impetuous selfishness of love, they passed the blooming summer hours in the heaven of young lovers; and when they drove up to Harrowfield-side, where every one was waiting for them, were ready to swear that they had not been half an hour on the road, though the heavy old phaeton and its sullen discontented freight had been there more than that time before them. They came, strengthened for anything that might happen: strengthened for Mrs. St. John's angry eyes, for Miss Annie's unpleasant smile, and Miss Le Jeune's disagreeable insinuations; strengthened for even Mr. Hunter's very natural self-repayment in the instant possession which he took of little Georgie, evidently intending to appropriate her (if he could) for the whole of the day after; strengthened for open war and for secret plots, by one of the longest spells of uninterrupted intercourse, and one of the most thoroughly confidential talks they had ever had together. If Georgie Fenton and Roger Lewin were in love with each other when the sun rose to-day, what could it be called now? As Georgie said afterwards, in her simple way, 'I felt that I was married to him, and that it would be a crime, and impossible, ever to break it off.'

The pic-nic was a success. Charley Dunn had sworn it, striking palms with Miss Louisa Globb, who bet him a shagreen cigar-case against a dog-headed riding-whip, that it would 'hitch somewhere: pic-nics always did; and though he was taken aback by the discovery he had made, and dismayed at the idea of the 'mess little Miss had got herself into,' yet he shook him-

self free from all embarrassing reflections when the time for action came, and exerted himself, as usual, to put the whole thing on castors, as the French say.

The day was fine, which was one essential secured; and there was enough and to spare of whom to choose for partners and comrades. Young people paired themselves according to fancy, and wandered away together with that pretence of unconsciousness we all know of; and their elders agglomerated themselves into groups, and fed each other with flattery or gossip, as the taste of the majority went. Mrs. St. John made profuse demonstrations to Lady Scratchley, who disliked her to almost plebeian vehemence, and thought her 'low,' wherein her ladyship was not so far out; and Miss Grandville and Miss Le Jeune stood on the outskirts of the party, criticising the young ladies of the assembly, and, strangely enough, finding none of them all pretty or well dressed, amiable or well mannered. But then they were both ladies of immense refinement, and had high ideals. The monkey-faced admiral singled out Maggie Wood, because she was as bluff as himself; and the two made no end of amusement for all within ear-shot of their rough play. The Miss Globbs, and their brothers, and their useful men, multiplied themselves, like so many Vishnús, and formed concentric circles of laughter everywhere—being poor, this was their manner of paying for their entertainment by society. The two Miss Hawtreys sang their last new songs to the accompaniment of the guitar which one carried, and of the concertina of which the other was the social 'professor.' Miss Moss was superb, haughty, and a little insolent in her cleverness; and pretty Mary Dowthwaite looked languishingly at young Abraham, on his side not backward to attract as many languishing looks as good fortune and the young ladies would throw in his way; and, in short, the whole scene was one of bright colours, animated faces, picturesque groups, and universal jollity, as the company dispersed among the trees of the

field-side copse, or sat on the fresh dry grass of the meadows, or perched themselves up on the tall banks, all enjoying themselves to the utmost of their natural ability, this warm, sunshiny, glorious summer day.

Mr. Hunter was kind in his way to all. A little heavy, perhaps, and utterly bankrupt in the small change of conversation; but meaning to be kind, which goes a long way. He did his arbitrary, clumsy best to keep Georgie tacked to his arm all the day; and she, partly for gratitude and partly for fear of observation, let herself be led captive until dinner-time; but then she slipped her leash, and managed in the simplest and yet the cleverest way in the world to get a seat next to Roger Lewin, far away from both host and elder sister; and when dinner was over, she made her escape into the wood: whether alone or not no one ever knew. But the latter half of the day was passed without her sweet face among the players at croquet and Aunt Sally; and it was only when evening and mustering time came, that she re-appeared—no one quite knew when, or how, or whence—her hands full of wild flowers, her eyes full of love, and her heart so full of happiness, she scarce knew how to hold it all together without letting it run out for all the world to see. A short time after Roger Lewin joined the group where she was; and he, too, came in the same apparitional way, looking, as Mary Dowthwaite said softly, 'as if he had met an angel in the wood.'

'Like Balaam's beast,' said young Abraham Moss, who did not like him.

So Mr. Samuel Harmer Hunter's grand coup went off to perfection. There was an immense amount of laughing and almost as much flirting; some friendships struck up—some, too, disintegrated; finally and sent crumbling to chaos; and some pleasanter bonds, and stricter, just begun in the weaving; and much that was charming if less that was intense, as the order and result of the day's experience. And when they all separated after a delicious dance and a first-rate supper at the

Oaks—Mr. Hunter's place—every one agreed that it was the most delightful thing ever given at Brough Bridge; and Mr. Hunter's popularity was assured, and the fact of his being a retired iron merchant condoned and done with.

But there is always a *mauvais quart d'heure* after every joy; the bill that must be paid when the cakes have been eaten and the wine has been drunk; and this quarter of an hour had to come to Roger and Georgie. Mrs. St. John had left them rope enough for the hanging. All the day after the first brush about the carriages she had purposely ignored the existence either of sister or secretary. Her sharp eyes, and hers alone, had detected little Georgie stealing off into the wood where Roger Lewin had sauntered not so long before—and she had held her peace: nay, she had even seen George's fresh muslin whisking through briars and brambles, in the endeavour to find a lonely place where Love might take his ease and not need Caution to stand sentinel against intruders—and still she held her peace: but when they all reached home, then the storm burst forth; and fat, lazy, irascible old papa lost a night's rest for trouble at the ill news his 'daughter St. John' brought him. He was a proud man, though a vacillating and a weak, and had no intention of allowing his prize child to fling herself away on a young fellow like Roger Lewin—a mere nobody, all very well in his way, but with only character and good looks for his fortune. And that didn't seem quite enough to the old banker, used to deal with thousands and tens of thousands. So the next morning the young secretary was sent for, betimes, into the library, and shown his bill—the cost of yesterday's confirmation of his love.

'So, young man!' cried Mr. Fenton, pushing his spectacles up over his forehead, and looking at Roger with as much disdain as anger; 'a pretty use you have made of your time, I hear; and a fine return for all my kindness to you!'

'I am sorry, sir, that you have

heard anything unfavourable of me,' answered Roger quietly.

'Unfavourable? Oh! you call it unfavourable, do you? Well done, Mr. Roger! You can be mealy-mouthed to yourself, I see, however bold in action. Disgraceful, sir; dishonourable, unmanly; that's what I call it! Unfavourable, indeed! I like that!'

Roger flushed. 'May I know the conduct to which you apply these terms, Mr. Fenton?' he then said. 'They are hard words for a man to hear unconnected with any definite fact.'

'Come, come, Mr. Roger! this kind of bravado will not do for me! You know well enough what I mean; and to affect this simpering ignorance is only to add hypocrisy to dishonour. Yes, sir; hypocrisy to dishonour: I repeat it. What is all this, I hear, of you and my daughter, Miss Fenton, eh, sir? Answer me that, I say!' striking the table with his fist.

'I do not know what you have heard, Mr. Fenton,' answered Roger, raising his eyes full to the old man's. 'I only know what I have to tell; I love your daughter, and she loves me; beyond this, I have nothing to confess.'

Mr. Fenton's puffy face changed curiously during his secretary's audacious speech.

'You love my daughter, and she loves you! Oh! that's it; is it?' he said, after a pause, speaking in a slow, deliberate way, quite different to his former petulance. 'Well, then, let us argue the matter coolly, Mr. Roger. There is nothing like coolness and Cocker. I suppose you have not rushed into solemn responsibilities without consideration? If you have induced my daughter to love you, you must have some plans for the future; marriage, I should suppose, and a home, and all that? What, now, have you got to offer her?' crossing his legs; 'what is your fortune? and what settlements will you make on her? I am not hard, you see, or unreasonable, and can discuss the matter calmly.'

'I can make no settlements, and I have no assured fortune. I have

only my love, my brains, and my hands,' answered Roger a little grandly.

'Poor pay, young man! poor pay! I doubt the pot boiling over *that* fire.'

'With love and courage, it is not such a very bad prospect!' returned Roger smiling, encouraged by Mr. Fenton's manner. Love is so credulous of good!

'Love and a fiddlestick's end!' roared Georgie's father, blazing out again. 'Don't talk your absurd sentimentalities to me, sir! There's no rational business in them! I ask you again; what do you mean to do for my daughter?'

'Work to maintain her; as you worked, dear sir, when you were young, and married Mrs. St. John's mother.'

'Now look, Master Roger,' said Mr. Fenton, uncrossing his legs and speaking not unkindly—for he really liked the lad, and was almost as sorry as he was angry at the whole affair—'this kind of folly must come to an end. You must see for yourself that it has no root, no foundation, no possibility of future life in it. Give it up, boy, as a dream—very natural perhaps, to your age and inexperience—but as a dream that must be shaken off. I trust your word so thoroughly, that if you will now promise me on your honour as a gentleman, to have done with this folly, I will overlook the past, and we will go on again as before. Give me your word, Roger, and let the thing stand by.'

'Thank you, sir; I feel all your kindness, and understand it to the utmost,' answered Roger; 'but I cannot give up your daughter's love, or her promise. So long as she remains true to me, I will remain true to her; and after. I cannot give her up, save at her own desire.'

'Then we must part, Mr. Lewin; we must part,' said Mr. Fenton testily.

Roger turned pale. 'I cannot remonstrate, Mr. Fenton,' he said sadly; 'you are in your right here, and I have but to obey.'

'I am sorry for it, Roger, very sorry; very sorry indeed to lose



you, because I really like you, and, until now, have respected you; and you just suit me. But I cannot keep a young man about me who makes love to my daughter, and wants to marry her on nothing a year. You have been a fool, my boy, that's all; but we part in no ill feeling, remember; and when I can befriend you, I will. I wish you had not been a fool, Roger! He put out his hand kindly, and looked at the young man with almost tenderness.

Roger shook his hand warmly. 'Promise me one thing only, dear sir,' he said earnestly; 'promise that there shall be no unfair play with your daughter; but leave me free to win her, if I can satisfy your requirements.'

'I will do nothing,' said Mr. Fenton, emphatically. 'I cannot answer for others,' he added below his breath.

'Thank you, sir,' again said Roger; 'your promise is everything to me.' Then he turned away, once again looking back and bidding good-bye before he closed the door behind him, for the last time as Mr. Fenton's private secretary.

'I wonder,' said the old man to himself half aloud; and then he stopped and thought. 'Oh no! no!' he cried out, 'what would Carry say!'

Roger had no difficulty in finding little Georgie. She, too, had had her fears about the 'bad quarter of an hour,' and knowing that her lover had been summoned at an unusual time by her father, hung about the passage, waiting for his appearance.

'Come with me a moment, alone,' said Roger in a low voice. 'I must see you alone, Georgie, whatever happens!'

She felt that something was wrong, and clung to him lovingly; not weakly, but with all her heart of love and girlish tenderness centered in that one earnest, clinging touch. They went into the conservatory—that favourite place for lovers; and there Roger told her what both knew would have to come when their secret was discovered; that Mr. Fenton knew all; that he

was dismissed, and must leave the house to-day.

'To-day!' said poor Georgie hiding her face. 'To-day! so soon after yesterday! Oh, Roger! what shall I do? what shall I do?'

'Trust to God, Georgie, and be a brave-hearted girl,' said Roger with quivering lips; 'and believe in me. Whatever you may hear, and whatever you may not hear—and the one is sometimes worse than the other—never have a moment's doubt of me. Believe in me, as I shall believe in you, though I neither see nor hear of you for twenty years to come; and be sure that the love which can be faithful through absence and trial, will be blessed in the end!'

She looked up into his face, and put both her hands in his. 'I will,' she said fervently. 'I will believe in you, Roger; and I will be faithful and true to the last day of my life!'

'Even if you never receive a written line from me? for I know that your sister would not suffer us to correspond openly, my Georgie; and I would not ask you to stoop to anything involving management or intrigue. But, can you believe in me through years of silence?—perhaps against the harder trial of falsehood, hearing that I was untrue to you?—going to be married to another?—all the reports so sure to be set afloat, where there is something to be gained by the severance of two lives?'

'Yes,' she said; 'I know that you will not deceive me; and I would believe in any one's falsehood rather than in yours.'

He caught her to him in a very passion of grief and love. 'God bless you, my angel! now I am satisfied! Oh! never doubt me, my Georgie. Trust me as I shall trust you, through all things—evil reports, apparent neglect—everything; and believe, as I do, that if we are true to each other, we must come to a good issue at the last! Wear this, somewhere out of sight, for my sake,' he then added, taking his signet-ring from his finger; 'it is my crest you see—a mailed arm holding a sword, and my motto,





Illustrated by H. J. Brown.

"FIRM AND FAITHFUL"

See the Story

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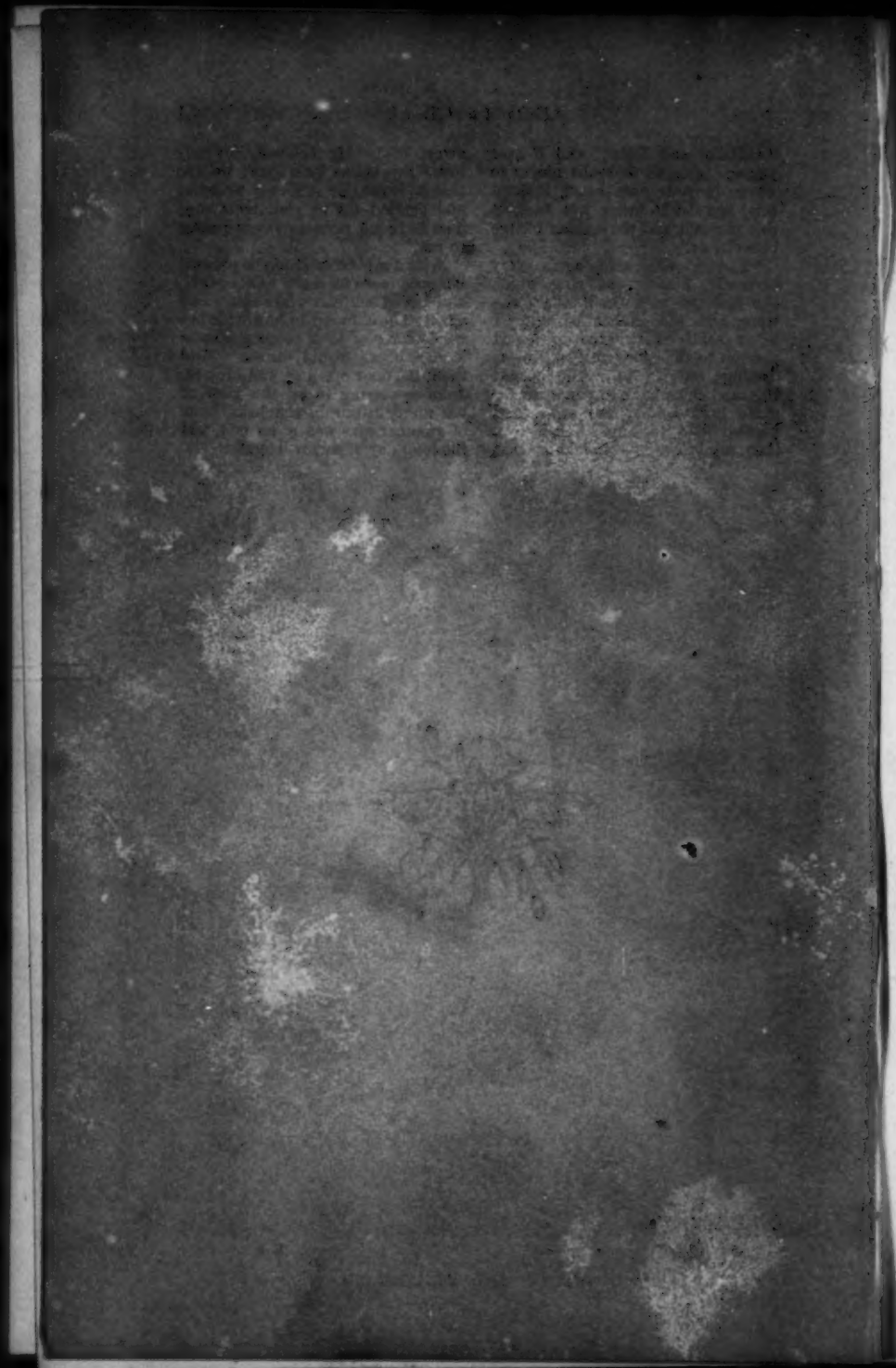
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[Drawn by M. Ellen Edwards.]

**"FIRM AND FAITHFUL."**

[See the Story.]



"Faithful and True;" and if ever you are inclined to doubt me, or to waver in your own heart, look at this, and let it bring you back to this moment and the solemn pledge between us.'

'I will,' she said again very earnestly, kissing the ring which she fastened to a small chain she wore, and hid in her bosom; 'I never shall be tempted to desert you or to disbelieve in you, Roger, darling; but if I do, I will look at this, and come back to you again.'

He held her in his arms, and pressed her to him. 'Good-bye, then, my beloved! God bless that

sweet life! My beloved, my only love! this is but for a time; believe that it is not for long, my Georgie; and again I say to you, trust me! You have no need to say the same to me!'

With a rapturous strain he pressed her once more fervently to his heart, and kissed her tearful face again and again; she clinging to him with her whole force of love, sobbing now as if her heart would break. And then, the door opening, and Mrs. St. John appearing in all the glow of her angry triumph, the brief hour of summer love was at an end, and the long day of sorrow began.



## THE PLAYGROUNDS OF EUROPE.

## M. Comettant's Holiday.

CERTAIN infirmities, like certain fashions, may be sported at a given date, but not before, nor afterwards. For instance, some dozen years ago, the height of elegance at Paris consisted in having a dislocated shoulder or a broken arm. The fashionables who unfortunately were not maimed in that special way, consoled themselves by pretending to be so. Those exquisites were supposed to have received their wounds on the honourable field of Steeple-chase. The mode has passed, and none but really maimed people follow it. 'Elegants' have adopted another infirmity.

Happy, thrice happy, are the men and women whose respiratory passages require the treatment of sulphureous waters! They have reached the acme of *comme il faut*. You feel yourself a very poor creature if you cannot carry to some thermal establishment a bronchitis or a granulated laryngitis. As with the broken arms of twelve years ago, *bon ton* requires that those who do not really suffer from the now fashionable affections, should at least pretend to suffer and make believe to be cured of them. They assume an illness, if they have it not. Luckily, without the least intending it, M. Comettant found himself afflicted with a pharyngitis which, by necessitating the waters of Cauterets, forced him to take rank with people of fashion. He calmly accepted his promotion, without giving himself any extraordinary airs. The result is a volume 'En Vacances,' describing what he saw, and also perhaps a little which he imagined, during his vacation rambles. Now a book from M. Comettant is always pleasant. Even when he makes merry at the expense of the English, it is done in such good-humoured and Gallic style that no Englishman can take serious offence.

'Les Vacances'! Charming words for grown-up people as well as for children. Two categories only of human beings find the expression un-

attractive; namely, the two extremes of society—the poor wretches for whom labour is a pitiless necessity, whose compulsory holiday is want of work, which means privation and misery—and the wealthy, for whom unbroken leisure is equally imperative. For the rest of the world, a vacation is the momentary forgetfulness of business, a truce to disagreeable preoccupations. It is liberty of mind and body, a diversion from the vexations of life; it is quiet, amusement, loitering, gossiping, movement, reverie, the delight of having nothing to do.

In every trade, a more or less long cessation of labour is granted every day to the labourer. For everybody there are Sundays and religious and public festivals. Our very domestic animals reap some advantage from human holidays. Game is the best off of all; for the law insures it perfect tranquillity during seven months of the year. How many men, M. Comettant the first, would consent to be hares and partridges on the same conditions!

The truth is, that work, which economists laud as the *summum bonum*, is really a necessity, and by no means a pleasure in itself. We submit to it reasonably and courageously, in order to be useful to ourselves and others, hoping all the while for the moment when we shall be able to withdraw from work.

Why, in fact, do people work? In order to live at present, and to have nothing to do at some future time. A great deal has been said about the right to labour; there is another right which is still more precious, namely, the right to rest. Our author desires it for his readers, at the conclusion of his book on 'Les Vacances'—which he is not sorry at having written (nor are we), now that it is completed, but which he would have been very glad not to be forced to write.

The trains which run from Paris to Pau, and the vehicles which



mount to Caunterets, Eaux-Bonnes, and the other hot springs, are full of invalids or people who so call themselves in obedience to the dictum of good society. Everybody in M. C.'s railway carriage was more or less damaged in their breathing apparatus. The bronchial question was the sole subject of conversation, to the exclusion of Poland, Rome, and Mexico. One single passenger, a little boy of eight, took no interest in the respiratory debate. His lungs were in perfect order, and, without being asked, he recited two or three fables and sang two or three songs. At nightfall, he gazed at the stars:

"Mamma, why isn't the moon a star?"

"I know nothing about it. Try to go to sleep."

About four in the morning, when drowsiness still hung on every eyelid, the young observer of nature, who sat next the window, exclaimed, "Look, mamma; only look!" His voice betrayed his enthusiasm.

"What is it? I see nothing particular."

"Why, mamma, it is what our schoolbooks call rosy-fingered Aurora opening the portals of the East."

"My little friend," observed an asthmatic lady who sat next the boy, "you would be the most amiable of children, as you are the most poetical and the most astronomical, if you would have the goodness to contemplate the opening of the portals of the East with your ventilator shut."

"Shut!" exclaimed the mother, evidently offended.

"Shut what?" asked the boy; "the portals of the East?"

"No, dear angel; only the ventilator over your window."

Travellers who know how to travel, will not proceed to the Pyrenees without stopping a day or two at Pau. Picturesquely protected by that chain of mountains, it is completely sheltered from north, east, and south winds. All the year round the atmosphere enjoys a perfect calm. The only breeze which agitates the leaves, without ever bending the branches, blows

from the west. Coming from the Atlantic Ocean, it is slightly impregnated with the saline particles suitable for strengthening delicate chests. Winter is scarcely felt, and summer is very supportable.

If the horses of Paris are to be pitied—the city where they are worse treated than anywhere else on the face of the globe—the destiny of the cows of Pau is far from being enviable. All the carts there are drawn, not by oxen, but by cows. However, if the cows of the country, besides their mission of supplying milk and calves, are also made to work like horses, they doubtless find their recompense in figuring in the city arms. A couple of cows adorn the shield.

Amongst the lions of Pau are the Place Royale, and the houses where Bernadotte was born. If it seems difficult for a man to be born in two houses at once, the reply is, that nothing ought to be impossible for Bernadotte, who, starting as a private soldier, was placed on the throne of Sweden by France, with whom he afterwards went to war. The first house, of somewhat wretched appearance, but ornamented with a marble tablet, stands in the Rue de Tran. The other, No. 5, Rue Bernadotte, is equally designated as the spot where that famous parvenu first saw the light. There are others, but hardly worth visiting, their authenticity being more questionable.

On the way from Pau to Caunterets, the diligence stops to lunch at Lourdes, in a grotto near which the Virgin appeared to Bernadotte Soubrans, aged thirteen, as she kept her sheep, in the month of February 1858. Leaving Lourdes, after mounting for three long hours, you find yourself in a narrow gorge, down which the waters of the Gare are rushing, and which just affords sufficient room for the pasteboard dwellings of Caunterets to display their attractions. The oppressed stranger feels a vague uneasiness, whose moral cause is the sight of mountains which environ him on every side, and whose physical cause is the atmosphere overcharged with electricity. Many invalids,

after three or four days, have had quite enough of the place.

No journal is printed at Canterets; there is not even a press to publish the list of strangers. Instead of news *à la main*, news *à la bouche* is circulated; and nothing is lost by the change. For instance, there was current the following story respecting a charming Parisian lady.

Last winter, this youthful dame complained of a tingling, in the larynx; her husband, on the other hand, suffered from pains in the stomach. At the commencement of the summer season, a brief dialogue took place between this couple of interesting invalids.

'Are you still annoyed with the tingling in your throat, Madame?'

'Alas! yes. And you, Monsieur, how is your stomach?'

'Sadly, Madame.'

'In that case, you ought to go to Vichy.'

'The doctor absolutely insists upon it.'

'He prescribes the Pyrenees for me. We shall be very far apart from one another.'

'We must bear it with resignation; health above all things.'

'Perfectly true. When do you start?'

'To-morrow. And you?'

'To-night.'

The air alone of the Pyrenees must have sufficed to re-establish the lady's health; for the waters of its sulphureous springs have never once approached her coral lips, and she makes, with admirable courage, long and distant excursions with no other guide than an officer with whom she became acquainted in Paris, and whom she met again, by accident, at Canterets.

The husband has derived equal benefit, merely from the purity of the Vichy air; for, at the hot springs, his sole beverage is capital wine, and his appetite is so excellent that he makes no difficulty about supping with an *ex-figurante* of the *Delasements-Comiques*, whom he patronises in the interest of dramatic art.

M. Comettant was amused by a scene which he witnessed between an Englishman and one of those

Béarnais\* peddlers who hawk marble knicknacks about the Pyrenees. He gives it as a characteristic proof of the commercial talents of the natives.

The hawker, speaking in Béarnais patois (unintelligible), inquired, 'Do you want anything, Monsieur?' Monsieur, without speaking, sticks his glass in his eye, and examines the merchant's portable shop.

'Come now, make your choice. Don't let it be said that you have been to Canterets and have left it without a souvenir.'

The Englishman inspects a set of buttons.

'Ah! your hand is lucky. I had a couple of dozen, no later than yesterday, and these are all that are left. Not dear. Trente-cinq sols. Thirty-five sous.'

The Englishman stares at the pedler with a look of astonishment, and, without uttering a word, returns the buttons to their place and prepares to take his departure.

'Listen to what I say, Monsieur. Don't go away, like that, without speaking. What fault do you find with the buttons? Can you say they are not pretty? There! I will make matters easy. Take them for thirty sous.'

'Combien ce botonn? How much for the buttons?'

'What do you say?'

'Combien ce botonn?'

'I have told you, I will let you have them for quarante-cinq sols, forty-five sous, because they are the last.'

'I don't understand you. Je comprendrais pas vô.'

'Pavot—Ques à co? What is that?'

The Englishman quietly takes out his pocket dictionary, looks for the word 'quesaco,' and after fruitless search, repeats, 'Je comprendrais pas vô.'

(To himself, the pedler.)—'What the deuce does he mean by his pavot? (poppy). Ah! I see,' he adds, shouting always in Béarnais, 'you don't understand French.'

'Je comprendrais pas vô.'

\* When France was divided into provinces Béarn was the province of which Pau was the capital.

'Will you take the buttons?'

'Yes, le bouton.'

'You shall have them for trois francs dix sols, three francs ten sous.'

After a moment's reflection, 'Je donnai à vô cinq francs pour le bouton. I will give you five francs for the button.'

'You offer me five francs for the buttons?' (This time in excellent French, which he spoke with as much facility as Béarnais, simply making use of the latter language to draw on and mystify strangers.)

'Oh! Je comprendrais vô!' highly delighted. 'Yes, je donnais cinq francs pour ce bouton.'

'Impossible; they cost me wholesale, on the top of the mountains where they are made, five francs sixty-five centimes. I will let them go for six francs, if that price suits you?'

'Vô voler six francs? You want six francs? Very well. Je prennaiss le bouton pour six francs.'

The isard (a sort of chamois) is not common on the northern slope of the Pyrenees; it is served, nevertheless, at tables d'hôte. It is indifferent meat, soft, and with a far too savage smell. There are people, however, who pretend to enjoy it. They are the braggarts of gastronomy.

Bears, too, are hunted; but they are so excessively bearish that they systematically retreat into the most inaccessible hiding-places, and are very rarely caught sight of. Notwithstanding which, last year one amateur killed a bear; but it was rumoured that the haughty Nimrod had sent for the animal from Paris. It was nothing but a menagerie bear. Certain visitors affirmed that they had travelled in company with the inoffensive creature, whose dead body they perfectly recognised. It was a shot which must have cost the sportsman little less than forty pounds.

Certain it is that from time to time shooting parties to hunt the wild bear are organised, at the news of the passage of one of those animals. Amateurs of strong emotions never miss the opportunity of braving the perils of the strife. Matters usually happen thus:

A shepherd takes a bear skin, puts it on, and posts himself at a spot where he is certain that some passing excursionists cannot help remarking him. The astonished strangers return to Cautelets or Eaux-Bonnes in a state of great excitement, and spread the news that a bear has actually made his appearance. The disguised shepherd then strips off his bear skin, folds it carefully, and shuts it up in his chest for the next occasion. He descends to the valley, and proposes to get up a hunt in company with a dozen of his friends who are as brave mountaineers as they are excellent shots, and who were not a bit frightened when they saw the bear. There is a sensational fête throughout the neighbourhood. People accost each other only to talk of the projected hunt.

'Do you intend going out after the bear?'

'Certainly.'

'They say he is enormous. Take care of yourself.'

'Bah! A man can only die once.'

Ladies supplicate their husbands not to venture on such a hazardous enterprise.

'My dear, I know your constitution. With your excitable nervous system, the mere sight of that frightful animal would suffice to trouble all your senses. Stop at home quietly with me, and don't expose yourself to any such risks.'

'I will follow the bear. If I did not go, people would believe that I was afraid to look death in the face.'

'You are the father of a family.'

'I am perfectly aware of it.'

'What will they do without their parent?'

'They will do without him, as others do.'

'Amadée, spare your life for those who love you!'

'Under any other circumstances, I should feel it a duty to yield to your entreaties; but in the present, it is impossible.'

'Listen to the voice of a friend, a wife, a mother, who prays and supplicates you!'

'I will go after the bear. I said so at the table-d'hôte, and my own

personal dignity requires me to keep my word.'

'Good Heavens! My Amadée devoted by a bear!'

'My dearest wife, it cannot be helped. It must be; and what must be, must.'

The party starts, after endless handshaking and kissing and affectionate wishes for good success; it returns without the bear, worn out with fatigue, but safe and sound. The chase, nevertheless, has not been an unproductive one for the wearer of the bearskin and his acolytes, who have pocketed innumerable tips.

Are there, then, no real bears to be seen here except those which come from Paris? Such is not exactly the case: witness the carbine presented to Lamazou the singer, by a society of Russian sportsmen, which proves that some are killed sometimes. Lamazou is a Béarnais who all winter long sings in Paris the original ballads of his native province, and in summer comes to the Pyrenees to repose his larynx and exercise his legs until he has encountered and slaughtered a bear. He employs Devisme's explosive bullets. When once the bullet is withinside the animal, it is all over with him: he is struck dead, as if by lightning, *foudroyé*. The grand point is not to be alarmed at the sight of the bear, and to hit the mark.

The rejoicings which took place on the 15th of August, the Virgin's fête-day and the Emperor Napoleon's, enabled M. Comettant to witness two kinds of racing peculiar to the Pyrenees—the mountain race for men, and the pitcher race for women.

What legs and lungs are necessary for the mountain race! At a given signal, fifteen of the nimblest mountaineers, bare-footed, bare-headed, in shirt-sleeves, and with their trousers turned up above the knee, started off at full speed. They leaped a first wall of stones, exactly as thoroughbred horses would do it, and then mounted a steep slope with the vigour of Zouaves making a charge. A second stone wall, which barred their passage, was cleared

with the same impetuosity as the first. At this point the rock is replaced by the earth of which the slope is formed. It rises, tortuous and sterile, at an angle of some forty degrees. The steeple-chasers, ceasing to run, here took to a foot-pace, striding along with remarkable ease and suppleness.

Half-way from the top, those who found themselves distanced, despairing to reach either of the three flags planted there, abandoned the contest and sat themselves down to take breath. Meanwhile, the others strode along with the same activity and ardour. But soon the prizes were seriously disputed by three only of the runners, who were now very close upon one another. One champion, adorned with brown cloth trousers, managed to get several yards ahead, and maintained his advantage till the end. He was scarcely visible to the naked eye; you were obliged to follow his movements with a glass. He did not appear to flag for an instant. The spectators, to use Madame de Sévigné's happy expression, had a pain in his chest. At last he snatched one of the flags.

But the prize was not yet his; for it was only awarded to him who should be the first to plant the flag at the starting-point, opposite the station occupied by the judges and stewards of the race.

Without losing a moment, the victorious runner set about descending the mountain with a rapidity that was truly incredible. Down the steep rock, covered with stones of all sizes and beset with natural obstacles, he seemed to glide as if he had castors on his feet. You feared that the winner, on reaching the goal, would fall dead with the final effort. Happily, nothing of the kind occurred. On arriving, the mountaineer nimbly bounded over the wall of stones, stuck his flag-staff in the ground, and began dancing a jig, to show he was not yet exhausted. A minute afterwards the two other laureates arrived almost together. The countenance of one of them betrayed distress, and he appeared to breathe with difficulty: they gave him a cordial

draught, which completely restored him.

As to the first-prize man, he was only a little out of breath; his feet had not a scratch. That is being something like a man! True, Batant-Lapeyre (the conquering hero's name has lived up in the mountains from his earliest childhood, and only comes down to Caunterets on Sundays). The three men of steel clubbed their winnings, and with the amount treated the vanquished to refreshments and a ball to the sound of the bagpipe. They drank and danced till two in the morning.

The pitcher race is comical. Three females entered the lists, each carrying on her head a large pitcher filled with water. One, two, three! and off they start, running as quick as possible, and striving to keep in balance their pitchers, which they are not allowed in any case to touch with their hands. It is a serious business: the prize is ten francs!

The three competitors, skimming the ground and pressing each other close, have twice gone round the square. One of them, finding herself suddenly distanced, makes a violent effort to regain the advantage; but she feels that her pitcher is losing its centre of gravity on the cushion which supports it on her head. The pitcher must fall—that's evident: but if she can reach the goal before the catastrophe, she will have won the prize all the same.

Redoubling, therefore, her speed, and instinctively raising her hands towards the pitcher, nevertheless without touching it, she is within a few paces of the wished-for spot, when the pitcher, alas! falls and is smashed at her feet.

How many ambitious folk of all descriptions have to behold their pitcher broken at the very moment of attaining their object! Poor woman! her heart is bleeding at having lost at once both her prize and her pitcher.

But Caunterets is rich in resources, and never fails to aid severe misfortune. A female acquaintance, a letter of chairs, moved by generous sentiments which it is impossible to

appreciate too highly, collects a subscription in favour of the dameel with the broken pitcher. From all quarters sous pour in, in such profusion, that the raceess discovers she has been playing a game of 'the Loser Wins.'

Charming women, do what they will, can never be otherwise than charming. The fact is proved at the springs de la Raillère, a little above Caunterets. If one operation, more than another, would appear incompatible with grace, certainly it is the act of gargling the throat. Well, at the risk of being disbelieved, our holiday-maker states that he has seen women who are never more graceful than when they gargle. And in what different ways they do it! Some, after taking a mouthful of liquid, sit down, lean their head back, discreetly half-close their mouth, raise their eyes to heaven, and so bathe their larynx, still and silent, in a position which appears extatic. Others remain standing, and do their gargle with rounded arms and open fingers, in a style that would make the fortune of a picture, if any painter were there clever enough to do justice to the pretty invalids in all the details of their graceful treatment. Others compose a melancholy countenance, and appear to be addressing a secret prayer: 'Oh, let my health return, in order that next winter I may not miss a single concert, opera, or ball!' Others, again, cover their mouth with a richly-embroidered handkerchief, and agitate the pupils of their eyes with mysterious shudderings of adorable delicacy. I look as if those ladies had taken lessons in gargling, as they have in dancing, playing, and singing. Are there, then, professors of gargeleism, as there are of music and deportment? Certain it is that, although the gargling room is the only place of public performance at Caunterets, the spectacle at least is gratis and original, and will help the simple spectator to pass a pleasant moment.

At last the one-and-twentieth bath was taken, the fortieth glass of water drunk, and the traveller left at liberty to depart, out of fashion:



that is to say, cured, for a time, of his creaking bellows. On his way back, at Bordeaux, he fell in with the master of a sailing-vessel, who bitterly complained of the ship-owner's tyranny. An owner's orders must be strictly obeyed, however absurd they may be. Captains had been dismissed from their command for enriching their owner by infringing his directions.

As an instance of what blind obedience may lead to, one captain, who sailed from Bordeaux for Rio Janeiro, had received from his owner written orders which appeared to him incomprehensible. During the voyage, from time to time, he read and re-read them, smiting his forehead, twisting his whiskers, and muttering, 'What can he want with such a lot as that; and where the deuce am I to go, to procure that class of merchandise?'

At Rio, the captain did his best to satisfy his owner's wishes, and succeeded, with the greatest difficulty. What incessant trouble and vexation it gave him during the voyage home! But the longest lane has its turning; the vessel arrived with all safe and sound, and the astonished owner came on board. The first thing he saw were hundreds of monkeys gambolling amongst the rigging, leaping from the mast-head to the yards, and hanging in clusters along the bowsprit. It came about thus. The owner meant to order his captain to bring home 1 or 2 monkeys; but the handwriting not being clear, it looked more like 1002 monkeys, which were imported from Brazil accordingly. The owner got rid of the monkeys as well as he could, and complimented the captain on his strict adherence to his instructions.

#### A HISTORY OF CROQUET.

**P**ALL MALL, the head-quarters of the club world, a spacious thoroughfare between St. James's Street and the Haymarket, derives its name from the game of *paille maille*, which was introduced into England from France in the reign of James I. That this game was known and played in this country in the reign of the modern Solomon, is evident from the fact, that in the third book of that remarkable treatise, entitled 'ΒΑΣΙΛΙΚΟΝ ΔΟΓΜΑ,' which the king wrote to the heir-apparent, Henry, Prince of Wales, as a set of rules for his nurture and conduct, it is recommended in the following manner: 'Certainly,' says the king, 'bodily exercises and games are very commendable, as well for banishing of idleness, the mother of all vice, as for making the body able and durable for travell, which is very necessary for a king. But from this court I debarre all rough and violent exercises; as the foote-ball, meetier for lameing than making able the uses thereof; as likewise such tumbling trickes as only serve for comedians

and balladines to win their bread with; but the exercises that I would have you to use, although but moderately, not making a craft of them, are running, leaping, wrestling, fencing, dancing, and playing at the catch, or tennis, archerie, *palle malle*, and such-like other fair and pleasant field games.' This is, we believe, almost the earliest date at which the game was played in England; for in 1598, just five years before James I. ascended the throne, Sir Robert Dallington, in his book 'A Method for Travel,' writes: 'Among all the exercises of France, I prefer none before the *paille maille*, both because it is gentlemanlike sport, not violent, and yields good occasion and opportunity of discourse, as they walk from the one marke to the other. I marvel, among many more spish and foolish toys which we have brought out of France, that we have not brought this sport also into England.' The game, however, was not generally played until the reign of Charles II.; as in a little work, 'The French Garden for



English Ladies,' published in 1621, occurs the following passage: 'A paille maille is a wooden hammer set to the end of a long stoppe, to strike aboute with, at which game noblemen and gentlemen in France doe play much.'

In 1670, however, the game was well known. In the edition for that year of Blount's 'Glossographia' we are told that 'paille maille is a game wherein a round bowle, is with a mallet struck through a high arch of iron (standing at either end of the alley), which he that can do at the fewest blows, or at the number agreed on, wins.' This game was heretofore played in the long alley near St. James's, and vulgarly called Pell Mell. The Mall, which at present exists in St. James's Park, was arranged by Charles II.; but the Mall, on which now stands the street above mentioned, was used as a ground for this sport as early as the reign of James I. The Apple-tree Yard—St. James's Square of the present day—was then a piece of pastime ground known as Pell Mell Close, and evidently derived its name from the locality where the game was played. That the game was very popular during the reign of the Merry Monarch there can be no doubt, as the king is often described as excelling at pall mall, and evidently was a zealous player. The poet Waller, in his poem, 'St. James's Parke, as lately improved by his Majesty,' witnesses to this fact in the following lines:—

'Here a well-polished mall gives us the joy  
To see our prince his matchless force employ,  
His manly posture and his graceful mien,  
Vigour and youth in all his members seen:  
No sooner has he touched the flying ball,  
But 'tis already more than half them all;  
And such a fury from his arm has got,  
As from a smoking culverin 'twere shot.'

The Duke of York, afterwards James II., was also a good player, as, in fact, were most of the courtiers; for Pepys records in his diary for April 2nd, 1661: 'To St. James's Park, where I saw the Duke of York playing at pell mell, the first time that ever I saw the sport in this country.' Taking Waller's poem as an authority, many writers

state that Charles II. introduced the game into this country, whereas we know it was occasionally played in the reign of James I., as we have already recorded. Prince Henry, however, played on the ground now occupied by the street, Pall Mall, which was then merely a walk made for the purpose, and lined with trees. In Charles I.'s reign, however, the game seems to have fallen into desuetude, as during the Commonwealth the alley, or avenue, had already begun to be converted into a street, and therefore Charles II. was compelled to arrange the avenue in St. James's Park, now known as the Mall, for the purposes of the game, and also to appoint men to keep it in good order. Our gossip, Samuel Pepys, in his diary for 15th of May, 1663, informs us how this was managed. He writes: 'I walked in the Parke discoursing with the keeper of the Pell Mell, who was sweeping of it, who told me of what the earth is mixed that do floor the Mall, and that over all there is cockle shells powdered, and spread to keep it fast, which, however, in dry weather turns to dust and deads the ball.' The Mall, too, was rolled regularly, and kept in beautiful condition with the greatest care, and was, according to a contemporary author,\* 'of a reasonable good length, straight and even, and if one had a paille maille, it were good to play in the alley.'

Authorities differ considerably with regard to the regulations of this regal pastime. In an old book of French sports, however, the following account of the game is given: 'This game, which is said to have been played by the Gauls, our ancestors, was so generally played in former years, that the greater portion of the promenades adjoining many of our towns consisted of a long avenue, termed the mail, because it was set apart for the *jeu de mail*. In the game the players stood at one end of the Mall, and endeavoured to strike the ball by hitting it with the mallet,

\* Nares' 'French Garden for English Ladies.'

through a ring which was suspended at a certain distance from them. Whoever first succeeded in doing this, won the game.' It may perhaps be imagined that the dissolute gallants at Charles II.'s court were not very energetic or persevering in a game which required so much exertion as pall mall. Mr. Pepys, however, tells us that the contests were often so keen, that people sometimes stripped to their shirts. On the demise of the king, the game died out in England almost entirely, although it continued to flourish in France, and lives there to this present day. On the death of Charles II., all traces of this pastime soon became lost in this country, until about thirty years ago, when a game sprang up in Ireland known as crokey, in which the operation of cracking the balls seemed to be the chief feature of the game, since the hoops were almost left to themselves, and the cracking was considered of most importance. The game soon found many admirers, and was encouraged by ladies, who took part in it. It is evident that in the reigns of the Stuarts, whatever manly accomplishments Nell Gwynn and her companions possessed, a participation in the game of paille maille was not among them. From crokey to croquet—the latter a Gallic imitative manner of spelling the former—the transition is easy; and although the orthography of the title of the game and the French word for gingerbread are identical, it is almost certain that there is nothing synonymous in their meanings. That there are quite enough points of resemblance between the games of croquet and pall mall, to justify our opinion that the groundwork of croquet is the older game, which we have already stated is so ancient that, according to a French writer, it was played by the Gauls, is evident, we believe, to all. In some particulars, of course, the games differ greatly as time has worked its innovations; but the mallets, and the shape of the balls, in name and form are identical. Indeed, the resemblance between the mallet of pall mall and the mallet

of croquet, is too complete to be doubted. There are now in the British Museum a pair of mallets used in the reign of the Stuarts, which, according to Mr. John Timbs, were found in 1854, in the house of the late Mr. D. L. Vulliamy, No. 68, Pall Mall, in a box. This contained four pairs of the mailles, or mallets, and one ball, such as were formerly used for playing the game of pall mall in the Mall of St. James's Park. Each maille was four feet long, and made of lance-wood; the head slightly curved, measuring outwardly 5½ inches, the inner curve being 4½ inches. The diameter of the maille ends was 2½ inches, each shod with a thin iron hoop. The handle, which was very elastic, was bound with white leather to the breadth of two hands, and terminated with a collar of jagged leather. The ball was of box-wood, 2½ inches in diameter.

We are enabled, by the courtesy of the authorities of the British Museum to give a drawing of these pall mall mallets, from which the reader can see how very closely they resemble the mallets now used in the game of croquet.

That the game of croquet has during the last few years become very popular, is simply a fact. A short time since but very few knew that there was such a game; and now, not only everybody seems aware of its existence, but almost every person can play at it, and, what is more to the point, finds very much enjoyment in the sport. The next question, therefore, to be considered is, what are the chief causes of the great popularity that this game has achieved in so short a time? Cynical old bachelors and misogynists aver that the reason why men like the game, is, because in it girls show their ankles; and that the reason why women like it, is, because it fosters their conceit, by allowing them to prove their equality with 'the lords of the creation.' This is the style of argument usually adopted by people who know little or nothing about this sport. The prevalent idea with regard to it, in the minds of such people, is that people play at it merely for the sake

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[Drawn by G. du Maurier.]

HOW NOT TO PLAY THE GAME!

[See "Croquet," p. 51.]





Drawn by G. de Moussy.

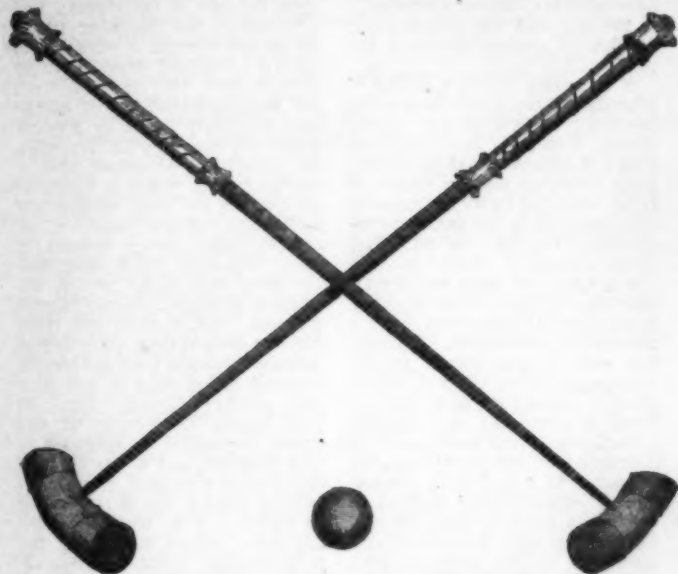
HOW NOT TO PLAY THE GAME!

[See "Cricket," p. 41.]



of flirtation, and that the process of knocking the balls about is quite a secondary consideration. One of the late Mr. Leech's pictures in 'Punch' stands recorded as a proof of this. The scene represents a croquet party, in which six young

ladies, armed with mallets, stand disconsolate, and declare it's no use playing if Captain Fairplay and Blanche go on in that absurd manner. The aforesaid couple are engaged in the mysteries of a deep flirtation at one end of the ground.



Now in a game of croquet, played by energetic people, such a state of things would be impossible, as each player would not only keep a watch on his ball, but would also pay attention to the progress of the game, and be unable to participate in a dialogue for even two or three minutes. For, although the subscriber would be the last to deny that the participation of ladies in the sport adds an indescribable charm to croquet, yet it is manifestly absurd to say that their presence is the main attraction. Good players of either sex can find enjoyment in the game, whether it is played solely by gentlemen or solely by ladies; and most men would undoubtedly prefer playing entirely with people of their own sex, rather than have the interest of

the game spoiled by a lady who knows little or nothing about the rules. The real cause of the great interest people, who know how to play, take in the game, is the pleasant excitement and sustained pleasure it produces—a feeling equally prevalent in, and equally enjoyable by either ladies or gentlemen. The fact that the game is never lost till it is won, and that as long as two players are at work the interest is sustained, as well as the fresh combinations each stroke produces, are in themselves sufficient to make croquet popular. Besides, there is no other game in which ladies and gentlemen can amuse themselves. Some people may mention archery; but that sport means a large fortune and a large field. No toxophilite can shoot on a lawn,

or purchase pleasure for eight people, as at croquet, for a trifling sum. Add to this the fact that there is always the chance of a budding archer shooting somebody or himself; and remember the vast disparity between the expense and danger of the two games. One can then easily account for the increasing popularity of the one, and the corresponding decrease in popular favour of the other.

It is naturally with a feeling of pleasure that we watch the rapidly-spreading knowledge and appreciation of croquet; but at the same time it is evident that at present the game seems to stand a chance of being destroyed by its innumerable devotees. When the game was rechristened croquet, the toymaker, whose speculative genius induced him to make the game and print a short set of concise rules furnished to him, quietly introduced it as a nice out-door amusement. It therefore soon became known among aristocratic circles, and as it was a novelty, and served as a pastime, it was at once taken up. Rapidly it then spread, until the demand for it became great enough to induce the lawmaker to manufacture croquet sets sufficiently cheap to bring it within the reach of most classes; and now rose other lawgivers whose knowledge of the game induced them to trample upon the authorized laws, and make fresh rules to suit their own convenience. Towards the end of 1863, Captain Mayne Reid raised the standard of revolt, and published a most extraordinary manual of croquet, containing 129 rules and 60 notes. The number of these rules, however, was not the chief obstacle. The fundamental propositions of the author on this subject were so entirely opposed, in the main, to the modest card of rules issued by the toymaker, that it became impossible for a follower of Mayne Reid to play with a follower of Jaques; and hence bickerings and disputes was the result, and the game began to be considered as somewhat difficult and not quite so nice as when one code only of rules existed.

In Captain Reid's manual he so-

dulously abused the croquet sets issued by Mr. Jaques, and recommended those made by another manufacturer, who, encouraged by the success of the game, had copied the implements as closely as he could without infringing the copyright law. This naturally had some effect upon the sale of the games; and therefore in the following spring Mr. Jaques deemed it advisable to issue a handbook, which not only differed from the captain's rules, but also contradicted those on the card previously issued by himself. About this time, too, Mr. Routledge, the publisher, considered that a croquet manual would be a popular addition to his series of sixpenny handbooks, and also issued a set of croquet rules, which differed in many important points from both the other two. And now in the kingdom of croquet anarchy reigned supreme. Not content with three different codes of laws, other writers published books of laws, and players invented sets of rules to suit their own peculiar cliques. Thus in lawn parties last summer it was almost impossible for strangers to play together; and so far did this independent system of croquet regulation extend, that it may safely be said that in no two places was the game played in exactly the same manner. Cheating, it has always been allowed, is the prerogative of ladies who play croquet; but now any person can defend any position in the game obtained unfairly by quoting some rule of the printed authorities. Not only, however, were the rules tampered with, but innovations on the implements became the order of the day. One nobleman had leather buffers placed at the heads of the mallet; another altered the shape of the hoops; another the colour of the balls; and another, thinking it derogatory to his dignity to be fettered with rules, had an entirely new set drawn up for his own especial use, and intrusted the literary task to a lady, who evidently had carried cheating in actual play to such an extent that she was compelled to adopt the same mode of proceeding in her book, for she copied the best part

of Captain Reid's eccentric handbook, and then produced her *Treatise* as the rules of the Earl of Essex. The professional author, however, soon instructed the amateur in the mysteries of the art of copyright, in return for which lessons the noble pupil paid the small sum of 100*l.*, with a few trifling costs. We merely mention this circumstance to show in what a dangerous state the kingdom of croquet is in at the present time. Nobody at present seems satisfied with any rules at all. If A likes one of Jaques's rules, he thinks that on other points Routledge's are better; and if B does approve of Mayne Reid's rendering of the croquet itself, he thinks that in all other respects that author is wrong. In fact, it is generally admitted that, according to the present state of people's minds on the subject, none of the handbooks are of any use at all, and consequently none of the rules need be adopted by any one anywhere.

Were we to quote the many instances in which the writers of the handbooks differ, we should require even more space than the indulgent Editor of London Society is willing to accord to us. There is, however, one point on which so much difference of opinion has been aroused, and about which so much has been said, that we take this opportunity of endeavouring to render it intelligible to those of our readers who indulge in the pursuit of croquet. The point we allude to is one which has derived its name from the title of the game itself; to wit, *The Croquet*. This is the head and front of the offending of each author, and has, perhaps, caused more contention than any other feature of the game.

The croquet is, as most know, supposed to be theoretically an accessory to the game, whereas, in reality, it is the fundamental basis. It is instituted to impede or assist the progress of the players; but in reality it is the progress itself, as nothing can be done without its assistance. We need not tell our readers under what circumstances a player is privileged to practise the croquet. The backbone of the

discussions is how the croquet is to be practised. We will see what the lawgivers say upon this subject. Mr. Jaques has—

'The croquet is done as follows: The player lays his own ball against the other, so that it touches it. He then places his foot on his own ball, which he strikes with the mallet. This will drive the ball with any strength, and in any direction he pleases. In croquetting a ball away, a player will hold his foot firmly on his own ball. In making a splitting, or following stroke, the foot is usually held lightly on one's own ball; but it is not obligatory to put the foot on at all. This is entirely at the option of the player. He is said "to take a stroke off" when he places his own ball to touch the croquetted ball very lightly, so as to leave it when croquetted in nearly the same position; but in doing this the croquetted ball must be perceptibly moved.'

Captain Reid writes:

'A ball having made roquet on another, is taken up and placed in contact with the ball in which it has roqueted. The player sets foot on the former, presses firmly so as to hold it in place, and with a blow of the mallet drives the roqueted ball in whatever direction may be desired. A ball having made roquet is taken up, placed contiguous to the roqueted ball, and without being held under the foot, is struck by the mallet, and driver, as also the roqueted ball, in the direction desired.'

In reading the opinions of the two authors just quoted, one cannot avoid the reflection that their directions would have produced a better effect if they had been somewhat briefer and not quite so discursive. The third lawgiver, Mr. Edmund Routledge, cannot be accused of either of these faults in the following rule:

'In croquing the ball, the player must keep his foot firmly upon his own ball, and if the stroke move it, the ball must afterwards be brought back to the position it occupied before it was struck.'

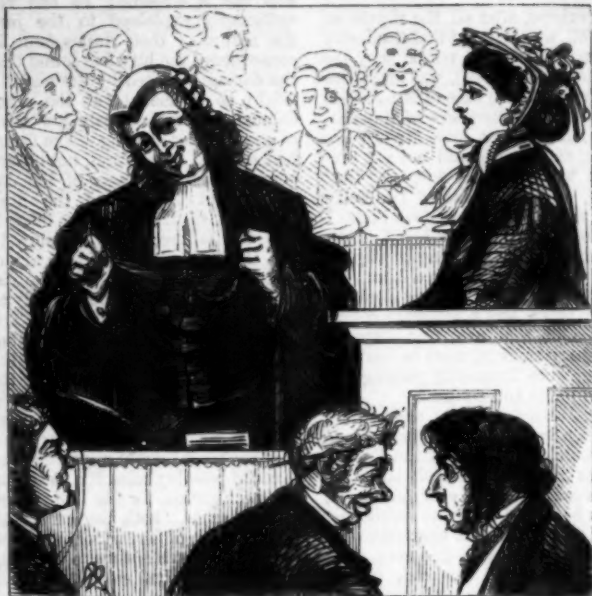
From these quotations it will be

seen that the first two writers are in favour of what is technically known as the loose or slipping croquet, and that Mr. Routledge pins his faith upon the tight croquet. Before our readers pass too severe an opinion upon the merits of this discussion—for it is the rules about the croquet that have caused almost all the confusion that exists in the croquet world—it is but fair to state that the rules originally issued by Mr. Jaques were in favour of the tight croquet, and that on no account was the ball of the croqueur to be moved when he performed the croquet. Captain Reid, the cause of the anarchy in the kingdom of croquet, was the first to suggest the new mode of playing, which was half assented to by Mr. Jaques in his book at the request of some croquet players. Since, however, the only way to render this game popular is to preserve its simplicity, and as the loose croquet is the cause of endless complications and consequent disturbances, we cannot but agree with the plain dictum enforced by Mr. Routledge, which experience has proved to be the most practicable. We have merely quoted these different readings of one rule to show how entirely the opinions of the lawgivers differ on this subject, and consequently how impracticable a good game of croquet is at the present time. Few of our readers who enjoy the pastime think in what a dangerous state their favourite now is, and how soon it may be in a moribund condition. If croquet is to remain popular, vigorous steps must be taken at once to restore it to its pristine health and vigour. To this end we would suggest that some ardent croquet player, who has plenty of spare time, should endeavour to raise a croquet parliament, in which the writers on

croquet, as well as the chief players from all parts of England, should have seats. The rules should be reconsidered, and their merits, as they now stand, firmly discussed. Each member must be at liberty to express his opinion, and the majority should decide the laws upon this subject. These rules could then be published, and if the matter were carried out properly the croquet parliament would occupy the same position in its own kingdom as the Marylebone Club does in the cricket world. Mr. Routledge has already stated in the 'Field' that he will publish in his handbook the laws of such a committee, and it is evident that Mr. Jaques will be glad enough to follow the same example. Then, with only one set of organized laws, the influence of croquet would spread and find increasing popularity every day, until it would occupy the same hold on the affections of ladies as cricket now does on the minds of gentlemen. The consequent increased familiarity between men and women, while it invigorated the latter, would refine the former, and would enable the sterner sex to appreciate better the helpmates that are bestowed upon them. Croquet clubs would soon spring up, and croquet grounds would be as well tended and cared for as cricket grounds are, and from the palace to the cottage, all would participate in the game, and note its innumerable charms and scientific attractions. To produce this consummation, however, an active and willing croquet player must at once come forward, cleanse these Augean stables, and restore to health and vigour that amiable young lady, Miss Croquet, who is pining and wasting away before the oppressive attentions and frequent interference of her numerous physicians.



## SCENES IN COURT.



'NOW, WHAT IS YOUR CALLING, PRAY?'—(Page 68.)

## CHAPTER III.

**MR.** Justice — was not an over-pleasant judge before whom to appear, though he had deservedly the reputation of being a just man and a sound lawyer. Nature had given him a harsh rough voice, and education had cast his manners after the same model as that of Nature's gift. He had studied long and well; and though he owed his elevation to the Bench to the influence of powerful friends, rather than to his own brilliancy as a barrister, the Chancellor's vote had fallen upon a man thoroughly well qualified to discharge the duties of his station, at least so far as the technical and strictly professional part of it was concerned. As regarded that courtesy and good-breeding which are so essential to the well-being of the Judge with the Bar, and therefore to

the proper discharge of the duties of the Bench, Mr. Justice — had none of them. He was ever coming foul of some one or other of his compeers, and daily with those among whom he had lately ranked. These put it down to conceit and arrogance, those to superciliousness and overweening trust in the man's own powers. The former were wrong, and the latter only partly right. It was ill-breeding tricking up Nature's unkindness, which made Mr. Justice — so uncomfortable a person to deal with. He did not intentionally lord it over his late brethren; and though he certainly did rely very strongly upon his own opinion, it was not designed disrespect which made him differ widely from his brothers of the Bench. He justified the travesty of Dryden's famous line on Shaftesbury:

'The statesman we abhor, but praise the Judge.'

which was rendered by Mr. Sans-brief,

'The Scotchman we abhor, but praise the Judge.'

But perhaps, after all, the rhyme on Dr. Fell, which stated that the doctor was not loved, the reason why the rhymer could not tell, was still more applicable to the case of Mr. Justice — and the members of the Bar. The Bar did not love Mr. Justice —; and they could not say precisely why they did not, only they knew, as in the case of Dr. Fell's foes, that they did *not* love him. I do not know that he loved them, but then he had a reason why in the fact that they disliked him. To say truth, little love was lost between them, and a necessary consequence of this was, that disputes and sharp sayings, more or less irritating, were frequently passing between judge and counsel.

Mr. Justice — was, as has been hinted, a Scotchman. He 'possessed' the Scotch language, as the French say, or rather the Scotch language possessed him, and ever and anon, when he waxed angry, it manifested itself by a broad and unmistakeable brogue. He was a fine man, with an interminable forehead, looked every inch a judge, but spoke and acted like a very disagreeable man. He knew he was disliked, and though, as I believe, he strove with himself against the temptation to resent the dislike by a *tu quoque* course, sometimes he failed in the attempt, or lost his temper in trying. Oftener than not he carried the war into the enemy's country; but I remember an occasion when, being put out by one of his brother judges who interested himself to save a youthful counsel from Mr. Justice —'s judicial cross-examination, that Mr. Justice — lost his temper, and foolishly said, 'That though his learned brother might love the counsel *much*, it was evident he hated *him* (Mr. Justice —) a great deal more.'

It was before Mr. Justice — that the great case of Tittle v. Tattle was appointed to be heard, by order of the full Court after motion made to it for a new trial. The action was an action for a libel published by

the defendant against the plaintiff. At the former trial the judge had ruled that certain evidence tendered was not admissible; he had not sufficiently explained to the jury the nature of their duties, and in consequence the jury had found that the damage suffered by the plaintiff might be estimated 'at the scandalously and ridiculously low rate' of one farthing sterling. The Court had granted a new trial, not on account of the smallness of the damages, but because of the non-reception of the evidence offered, and the failure of his lordship to tell the jury what they had to do. Those who knew said that the damages were assessed too highly as it was. Neighbours of Messrs. Tittle and Tattle were of opinion that the libel of the latter against the former could not possibly have the effect of lowering Mr. Tittle in their estimation, for the simple reason that Mr. Tittle had never occupied any place therein, any more than it could possibly raise Mr. Tattle in their estimation, for the like reason. *Arcades ambo*, 'both are cads,' was the sentence of Drearyton on them. Mr. Tittle would not make much by the motion he had gained, Mr. Tattle would not be cleansed from original caddishness by the verdict of a jury in his favour, nor laden with any extra obloquy by reason of a verdict against him. Mr. Tittle, 'whose only object in bringing the action was to clear his character and his fame, which were dear to him'—so said his counsel at the first trial—pursued the second suit purely on principle; he despised the pelf, he scorned the imputation of seeking damages, his single motive in moving for a new trial was to vindicate justice, set at naught by her professor; that—nothing more influenced Mr. Tittle. He had been 'advised and credibly informed' that he had a right to a new trial, and his right, for principle's sake, he determined to pursue. The lawyers could not possibly have any objection, they alone would gain by the exercise of Mr. Tittle's right; they had, at his request, gained permission for him to have right done, and they were now assembled be-



fore Mr. Justice — in Westminster Hall for the purpose of getting for Mr. Tittle and selves all the benefits attaching to the claim.

Mr. Wobly, Q.C., and Mr. Rebutta represented Mr. Tittle, and the defendant was represented by Mr. Serjeant Silk and Mr. Theodore Speecher.

Mr. Justice — was late in coming into Court, and the interval between the hour at which he usually sat and that at which he did sit, was given over to time-killers to be destroyed. Those who had no briefs to read nudged and bothered those who had. Mr. Sansbrief, already mentioned, took occasion to relate the history of his engagements at Lady Daah's ball, at which he had been present the night before. Mr. Serjeant Hammer hurriedly explained to a willing but unemployed junior the mysteries of a case which he had just asked the junior to take in hand for him. Mr. This and Mr. That devoured their briefs for the fiftieth time, in hope of finding out some new thing not previously noted. The reporters recut their already sharpened pencils; and idlers, who had nothing whatever to do in the Court, complained loudly of being kept waiting by the judge.

At length Mr. Justice — was announced. An usher drew aside the curtain at the side of the Bench and shouted, for the guidance of all below, 'Silence!' He was closely followed by the judge, holding up the skirts of his clothing. The bar rose, Mr. Justice — bobbed once to either end of the rows of counsel and once to the jury. The case of *Tittle v. Tattle* was called on, the jury were sworn 'a true verdict to give according to the evidence,' and Mr. Rebutta rose to state the pleadings.

The pleadings were read, and then Mr. Wobly, Q.C., addressed his lordship and the jury on behalf of 'his much ill-used client,' commenting on the facts connected with the late trial, and urging the points which he deemed to be of importance. He descanted for a long time on the nature and definition of a libel, explaining what they were to the jury,

who did not understand them, and to his lordship, who did, until his lordship, tired with the repetition of the learned counsel's conclusions, said, after many but vain interruptions, which had only sent Mr. Wobly back to recommence *de capo*, 'You are unnecessarily long in your statement. Why tell me the same thing three times over? The first time you told me my mind apprehended it; the second time it took it in; and the third time it fatigued me.'

Mr. Justice — was evidently not in a good-humour. Mr. Wobly took his snubbing kindly, and even made capital out of it, by saying that he was glad he had so well informed the Court of the matter he desired to lay before it. He had no wish to be tedious, but rejoiced in having saturated the mind of the Court and jury with the merits of his client's case.

Mr. Wobly knew, moreover, that his turn would come. The judge had interposed many times, to the great let and hindrance of the case. He asked innumerable questions and otherwise vexed the souls of counsel, till all, and especially Mr. Wobly, Q.C., were irritated to objecting point.

'Can ye tell me how lang 'this case will last, Mister?' inquired his lordship, apparently concerned himself as to the duration of the case.

'I really cannot say, my lord,' answered Mr. Wobly; 'it took two days on the former trial, and there were no interruptions.'

'Oh, indeed!' remarked the judge, frowning, and taking refuge in his notes, about which he seemed to busy himself intently, while Mr. Wobly continued his arguments unmolested, enjoying a short triumph before his own downfall. Mr. Wobly spoke for some time upon the several points he had to make, and observing that the judge was busily engaged, apparently upon his notes, requested him to be so kind as to make a note of the closing argument, which Mr. Wobly evidently considered a clincher. To whom his lordship, looking steadily at him, while he completed without regarding it the word he had last

begun, said in the broadest Scotch, which showed the pitch to which the judicial bile had risen—

‘Do not think, sir, that I am noting down your arguments; I am only noting the obvious *replies* to them.’

A suppressed laugh followed this hard-fisted blow of the judge, after which Mr. Wobly, who had but little to add to his speech, finished his address, and sat down a little the worse in temper for his castigation.

Witnesses were called and examined on behalf of the plaintiff, with a view to showing that the libel which was the subject of the action had really been published by the defendant. One of the libels complained of was contained in a ballad which it was alleged had been both written and published by the defendant; and the controversy upon this point waxed hot and fierce, giving rise to an animated discussion upon the further question whether, supposing said ballad to have been written and published as alleged, the words objected to constituted a libel or not. As Mr. Wobly and Mr. Serjeant Silk wrangled and fought in the interests of their respective clients, without satisfying themselves or the court upon the question of libel or no libel, and his lordship said he could not withhold the case from the jury, who were judges on this point as well as upon the issues of writing and publishing, a suggestion was offered by Mr. Speaker, the junior counsel for the defendant, which seemed upon the face of it to present many advantages.

‘Words concerning which there may be a doubt that they are libellous, may be shown to be so by the tone and manner in which they were uttered,’ said Mr. Wobly; ‘and I have witnesses here to speak as to the tone and manner adopted in this case.’

‘Your law *may* be sound,’ answered the serjeant, ‘but how is it possible for you to give evidence as to the tone and manner in which a libel was uttered? The character of the tone and manner must be purely matter of opinion. I do not

see how you can give admissible evidence on that head.’

‘The alleged libel was introduced, my lord, at a club supper, as I am informed,’ said Mr. Speaker, ‘and published by being recited from a manuscript copy. As the question of libel seems to hinge entirely on the tone in which the words were delivered, perhaps your lordship would allow the ballad to be sung in court; the jury would have better means of judging—’

‘My difficulty in the way of complying with your wishes is the choice of a songster,’ observed Mr. Justice —; ‘unless my brother Silk’ (who had a notoriously shrill and unmusical voice) ‘can assist us.’

‘A song from Mr. Serjeant Silk!’ cried some wag in the back benches. ‘A song!—Mr. Serjeant Silk’s song!’ was repeated by one and another, till his lordship, afraid of the storm he had raised, was obliged to interpose, in order to prevent the court becoming a bear-garden. The case went on; the witnesses for the plaintiff were examined, and Serjeant Silk, who had good-humouredly excused himself from joining in his junior’s recommendation, cross-examined them. One of the witnesses was a nursemaid, resident in the town of Cambridge—or, rather, she was a nursemaid *de jure*, and a nursemaid and fine lady *de facto*—too much of the fine lady to allow of the homely title of nursemaid soiling her addition, as she showed when the Serjeant cross-examined her in the witness-box. She showed it, but had done wiser to have saved her character at the expense of her dignity.

‘Your name is Jane Hinton, I believe?’ said the serjeant.

‘It is, sir,’ answered the witness.

‘You reside in the town of Cambridge?’ inquired the serjeant.

‘I do, sir,’ replied the witness.

‘Now, what is your calling, pray?’ pursued her questioner, looking archly at the jury, as though he knew something about her that would materially influence their opinion of her. The girl was, as I have said, too fine a damsel to state concisely the nature of her

calling, and her pride laid her open to insinuations that might or might not have been founded on truth.

'I have the charge of infants, sir,' answered the girl, thinking, I suppose, to save her dignity by this roundabout way of calling herself a nurse.

'Oh, indeed!' remarked the serjeant; 'you live in Cambridge, and have the charge of infants. Now, pray tell me, by "infants" do you mean undergraduates of the University under the age of twenty-one?' and as the serjeant put the question he looked yet more archly at the jury, as though he had for certain some information which would effectually discredit this witness in their eyes. But for all he strove, if he really strove at all—for I believe it was merely the irresistible temptation which provoked the question—the girl succeeded in impressing the jury with the conviction that she was a respectable and ingenuous witness, and the case went on as if the Serjeant's shot had not been fired.

A witness was now brought forward to prove that a book had been offered for sale by the defendant to him, in which another of the libellous statements included in the present action was contained; and having given on his examination in chief but a poor and confused account of the circumstances under which he had been asked to buy the volume, Serjeant Silk pressed him severely, on cross-examination, both as to the appearance of the book and his knowledge of the libellous statement itself.

How large was the book? Was it the size of the serjeant's brief? Was it as ponderous as Daniel Lambert? What colour was it? Blue, red, violet, pink? or, as the Serjeant finally suggested, chameleon colour? Was it bound in boards or in calf? Was the witness sure it was bound at all? Would he swear it was not bound in rhinoceros-hide; or in mouse-skin; or French velvet; or, like Falstaff's eleven assailants, in buckram?

Had the witness seen the libel? Was he aware that a certain legal

document was called a 'libel,' though it contained statements injurious to no one; and would the witness swear it was not such a libel he had seen? How long was the libel? Was it in verse or prose? As long as the witness's arm, or as the Serjeant's nose? and so on, with a number of questions more or less calculated to confuse, winding up with some searching inquiries as to whether the witness was not commonly known as 'Witty Dick,' and whether he had not been deemed too clever for the situation of village schoolmaster, or, at all events, been relieved of that post for some cause or other?

Between the questions which related to the book, the libel, and himself, 'Witty Dick'—if such was his *soubriquet*—stumbled sorely. He grew confused with his answers, said that the book was so long, the libel so thick, and that for himself, whatever folks might say, he was not witty, though his Christian name certainly was Richard.

'You say, sir, that the book was so long, and the libel was so thick. Now, let me ask you, do you know the difference between long and thick?'

Of course the witness knew; so he said, and endeavoured to give proof of his knowledge by means of an illustration; but before he could yield to the court and jury the benefit which this might have afforded them, Mr. Justice —, who evidently thought the man's evidence to be worth just what it appeared to be worth, and was getting tired of the whole thing, broke in with, to the witness—

'Why, sir, you yourself are an example of the difference. You are thick-headed, and you are not long-headed.'

A genuine and hearty laugh followed this sally of his lordship, which served also to show, if need were, that though it may be true, as once famously alleged, that a Scotchman must undergo a surgical operation before he can understand a joke, the like process is not needed to enable him to make one.

The case of *Tittle v. Tattle* went on to its finish; and if 'principle,'

as represented by the plaintiff, was rewarded by a second verdict in its favour, so justice, represented for the nonce by the defendant, triumphed also. Despite the eloquence of Mr. Wobly, Q.C., who in thrilling language described the irreparable injury sustained by his client, Mr. Tittle, 'a most eminently respectable man' (the learned Counsel did not accompany this statement with the celebrated definition of 'respectability' once put forward, which defined a 'respectable man' as one who keeps a gig); despite the burning words in which the jury were told to consider the grievous nature of the wrong done to the feelings of Mr. Tittle, who, since the publication of 'this infamous and malicious libel,' had been known by, and even received letters addressed with, the offensive, deeply insulting epithet of 'King of the Cabbage,' and—for he was a tender and loving husband—his feelings, 'which the jury would let Mr. Tittle and the world know could not be outraged with impunity,' had been yet more deeply and sorely wounded by 'an insolent and cowardly allusion to the dear wife of his bosom, who had been covered with opprobrium and scorn under the title of 'Lady Bugle Eye.' Notwithstanding all the force which Mr. Wobly, Q.C., put out—a force so great that his lordship complimented him upon it, regretting at the same time (surely the 'no interruptions' wound rankled still in his breast) most sincerely, that his own poor judgment was dead against the learned gentleman's conclusion—the twelve impassible men who had been conjured 'not to fling away their rights as Englishmen,' and 'to remember that Mr. Tittle's case was their own case, and the case of every one of Her Majesty's subjects,' could not be brought to estimate the damage done to the character of Mr. Tittle at more than one farthing, the sum at which a British jury had already once assessed them. His lordship concurred in the verdict, expressing it as his opinion that even now the damages were put too high.

And so the case of Tittle v. Tattle

was disposed of. Whoever lists to know more of it, let him search the records of Her Majesty's Court of Special Demurrers; and if he wishes to learn what is comprehended in the dominions of 'Lady Bugle Eye' and 'The King of the Cabbage,'—the knowledge will help him in ascertaining how it was the jury came to the conclusion they did—let him acquaint himself with the manners and customs of certain villagers in the county of Cornwall, who live in that part of it which looks towards the north and the setting sun.

One more story about Mr. Justice —, and I have done. An important but somewhat tedious case involving the law of liens, came, by way of appeal, before the full Court in which his Lordship sat. Counsel on both sides had been long in speaking, the weather was warm, inviting sleep, and Mr. Justice —, yielding to counsel and the weather, was, so report said, guilty of the sin of Eutychus. Indeed charity would lead one to credit rumour's statement, since otherwise he must go further afield to find some medical or scientific reason for the strange sentiment to which Mr. Justice — presently gave utterance.

A quarter of an hour had elapsed since his lordship took his last note, as long since he had expressed any opinion upon the case before him; counsel had not ceased to pour forth streams of law upon the difficult subject of pawns and liens; the words seemed to permeate through the nodding cranium of the learned judge, and there to mingle with untoward recollections of zoological gardens and wild beasts in menageries, for, as counsel ceased and silence roused his lordship to attention, Bench and Bar heard with astonishment this marvellous judicial utterance, in broadest Scotch, proceed from Mr. Justice —'s mouth—'It's ma opinion that if the lien (lion) had been chain'd, there'd ha' been nun o' this damage.'

And now the trial is over, witnesses and jurymen have retired, advocates in silk and stuff are about to rest from their labours,

his lordship is gathering up his skirts to go, and there are unmistakeable signs of a general clearance. I, too, must bring my case to a close. The 'points' have all been stated, the facts laid conscientiously before the jury; I leave it for others to sum up the whole. 'London Society,' to whose bar I have been

called, will have to pronounce its verdict upon the matters I have pleaded; all that remains for me to do is to thank the 'Grand Jury' for the patient hearing it has accorded to me, and then beg 'leave to move' that it will as kindly hear those who 'will follow on the same side.'

## THE LONDON OPERA DIRECTORS:

A SERIES OF CURIOUS ANECDOTIC MEMOIRS OF THE PRINCIPAL MEN CONNECTED WITH THE DIRECTION OF THE OPERA;  
THE INCIDENTS WHICH DISTINGUISHED THEIR MANAGEMENT;  
WITH REMINISCENCES OF CELEBRATED COMPOSERS AND THE LEADING SINGERS WHO HAVE APPEARED BEFORE THE BRITISH PUBLIC.

By the Author of 'Queens of Song.'

### CHAPTER V.

A 'HUMOROUS' DIRECTOR—RIVAL OPERA-HOUSES—DESTRUCTION OF THE PATHEON—GHARDINI—STEPHEN STORACE—MICHAEL KELLY—NOVERRE, BALLET MASTER—SHERIDAN—A NOBLE AMATEUR—RADINI, A NEEDY POET—VIOTTI—TAYLOR'S PHILOSOPHY—A NON-RENUMERATIVE BENEFIT—MRS. BILLINGTON—MR. GOULD—RIOT AT THE OPERA HOUSE—MADAME CATALANI—MANAGERIAL DIFFERENCES—TAYLOR'S QUARREL WITH THE SUBSCRIBERS—CALDAS, WINE MERCHANT AND MUSICAL DIRECTOR—WATERS—A BATTLE AT THE OPERA—MR. WATERS, DIRECTOR—PRACTICAL JOKES [1791-1816].

MR. THOMAS TAYLOR, who was proprietor of the King's Theatre at various periods ranging from 1779 to 1803, was one of the most eccentric of beings. He was what people then denominated a 'humorist'—merely because he was exceedingly queer, and wonderfully impudent. In the outset of his career he had been a clerk in the bank of Snow and Co., and as he really had a certain degree of cleverness and acuteness, he might have made a respectable fortune, had he not found, as he declared, 'the climate of Snow and Co.'s bank too cold for his complexion,' and quitted the precincts of the City to become manager of the King's Theatre. For this position he had no qualification beyond a passion for speculation. He is described as having had 'all Sheridan's deficiency

of financial management, without that extraordinary man's resources, so unaccountably brought into action when every refuge seemed closed against him.'

He had also Sheridan's mania for practical jokes. On the occasion of the laying of the first stone of his new theatre (1791), he played off one of his pranks. A party of his friends persuaded him to invite them to breakfast on the morning of the day appointed for the ceremony. To this he agreed, but secretly determined that he should not be a loser by his enforced liberality. With this idea he wrote in the name of some mutual friend to each of the gentlemen who were to be his guests, recommending them to take a supply of provisions, as their host meant to play a trick on them, by setting them down to empty dishes. The advice was obeyed; each gentleman sent, or took in his carriage, a plentiful contribution of preserved meats, pies, lobsters, champagne, or similar delicacies. On entering Taylor's room, they were disconcerted to find the table laden with the choicest viands, and, on seeing the evident hoax, they could not help breaking into a violent fit of laughter. With imperturbable gravity, Taylor ordered into his own larder the good things which they had provided, and then sat down to play host. Breakfast over, he pretended that he wished to show them a valuable picture, and ushered them into an adjoining room; he then, apologising for a momentary absence, left them,



locked the door, and ran off to join the procession to the site of the new theatre. The prisoners, after a time, began to wonder at his prolonged absence, and on 'trying the door, were dismayed to find themselves locked in; they knocked repeatedly, and shouted, and it was not until they were nearly frantic that a servant approached. The man protested that he had no key, but said that he would instantly follow Mr. Taylor and obtain one. This he did, and the released captives issuing forth encountered a large placard, announcing to the public an 'unparalleled novelty in natural history,' in the exhibition of fourteen full-grown jackals, or *lions' providers*, to be seen at the house of Mr. Thomas Taylor, all living in one den, in perfect amity! After renewed laughter, the jackals hastened to the Haymarket, arriving just as the ceremony was concluded, when Taylor affected great surprise that so contemptible an exhibition as a 'wild beast show' could have detained them. This joke was a type of his life, which was 'one continual hoax.'

His ingenuity and address enabled him to maintain his position with some firmness, although he was so obstinate, and had such a total want of foresight, that he was constantly entangled in some awkward dilemma. He was fortunate enough to obtain large advances from his friends on his first essay in the management of the Opera, which advances, it was believed, he had the honesty to repay, the Opera being excellently supported.

So rapidly was the work of building carried on, that in less than a year from its commencement (in 1791), the new King's Theatre was completed.

To obtain leases of the ground on which the theatre was built, Taylor was obliged to pay heavily. The principal part of the ground belonged to Mr. Holloway, who leased it from the Crown. The house was rebuilt in a very superb style; but, in consequence of a serious misunderstanding which had arisen between Taylor and the Lord Chamberlain, the unfortunate proprietor could not secure a licence to open his establishment. The performance was therefore suspended. The Pantheon, however, was converted into an elegant and specious theatre, and, by permission of the sovereign, was called the King's Theatre. It was opened in February, under the direction of Mr. O'Reilly, who engaged Madame Mara and Pacchierotti; the band was led by the celebrated Cramer, and Signor

Borghi was manager. Taylor, not anticipating a rivalry so formidable, had engaged performers for his establishment, but the licence being withheld, he was unable to offer his patrons anything more attractive than ballets, and concerts in which the music of the operas which he had prepared was given without action. His chief singer was David, who was greatly admired on the Continent. David was supported by 'poor old Sestini,' a prima donna whose day had passed. There were no other singers of even tolerable merit. The dancers were numerous and good. The hostilities between the Pantheonites and the friends of Taylor were very injurious to both parties, and continued longer than was expected. David, although one of the finest tenors of the period, was not able to attract crowded audiences, especially as he could not appear in opera. During the violent war between the operatic establishments, the visitors to both houses became thinner every night. O'Reilly was nearly ruined. At the end of the first season (1791) he found that he had incurred debts to the amount of 30,000*l*. He proposed that Taylor should take the debts of the Pantheon, and with them its operatic licence, and that a committee should be appointed, with Taylor as the acting director. But this offer Taylor was obliged to refuse, as the Chamberlain would not give his consent. In January, 1792, the Pantheon was destroyed by fire. The night it was burnt, Sheridan was looking at the conflagration, with Kelly, the singer. As he was observing how very high the flames were, and asking if there was any possibility of extinguishing them, an Irish fireman heard his exclamation, and cried, 'For the love of heaven, Mr. Sheridan, don't make yourself uneasy, sir; by the powers, it will soon be down; sure enough, they won't have another drop of water in five minutes.' The good fellow imagined that the destruction of the Pantheon must have been gratifying to Mr. Sheridan, as the proprietor of Drury Lane.

The company then removed to the little theatre in the Haymarket. Giardini, who had returned to England in 1789, took the direction of this establishment. He had expected to share the public favour with Cramer, and was bitterly disappointed in his hopes, finding that Cramer was so much admired that he appropriated all the applause and all the engagements. Giardini, meeting Cramer one day, thus sarcastically addressed him, in his irrita-



tion, 'How do you do, Mr. Harlequin Everybody?' To which Cramer blandly replied, 'Pretty well, thank you, Mr. Harlequin Nobody.' In 1793, Giardini was compelled to leave England: he went to St. Petersburg, and thence to Moscow, taking with him a company from London. In Russia, unhappily, his disappointment was only renewed. He at length sunk into misfortunes of his own creation, and died at Moscow, when eighty years of age, in the deepest penury and distress.

By a trust deed executed in 1792, the Opera-house was charged with an annuity to O'Reilly, and with certain other encumbrances; also with an annuity to Mr. Thomas Harris, of Covent Garden Theatre, which he afterwards relinquished. No nomination of directors having been made, the entire management of the theatre was intrusted to Mr. Taylor until 1803.

In 1792, as Taylor could not organise performances until the affairs of the theatre became more settled, Sheridan entered into an arrangement with him to carry on Italian operas twice a week at the King's Theatre—on Tuesday and Saturday. On these nights the Drury Lane company performed at the little theatre in the Haymarket, and on the other nights in the week at the Opera-house. Sheridan appointed Stephen Storace and Michael Kelly joint directors of the Italian Opera, with a *carte blanche*, as they were both men of tact, experience, and strict honour.

Storace was the son of a well-known performer on the double bass, who resided in this country. He was born in 1763. When eleven years old, so great was his assiduity and love of music, he could play the most difficult solos of Tartini and Giardini with perfect correctness. His father, finding that he had such a strong taste for music, bestowed the utmost care on his education, and afterwards sent him to Italy. His progress in scientific knowledge was rapid, and he soon became acknowledged as a skilful composer. He had visited England for the purpose of obtaining from Gallini an engagement for his sister as a comic singer, and had been appointed stage-manager at the same time: from that period (1787) he had taken an active part in the affairs of the house, until he became disheartened by the petty intrigues and jealousies which he saw daily within the walls of the theatre, when he withdrew to Bath, and devoted himself altogether to drawing. Finding, however, that he could make nothing by his efforts in

that art, he unwillingly returned to London, and resumed the musical profession. He was introduced to Sheridan by his friend Kelly as a composer of some distinction. The public liked his operas, and his popularity never waned during his lifetime; he is said to have received from the music-dealers larger prices for some of his pieces than had ever been given before,—a promise, though probably safe, method of estimating the value of popular favour.

Michael Kelly was a native of Dublin, the son of a wine merchant. At a very early period Michael displayed a passion for music, and he was placed by his father with excellent instructors. Rauzzini, when engaged at the Rotunda in Dublin, heard the boy perform, and, after giving him some lessons in singing, persuaded Michael Kelly, senior, to send him to Naples. Michael went, at the age of sixteen, and received lessons from the celebrated composer, Fineroli. He sang at different theatres in Italy, then in Vienna, where he was much noticed by the Emperor Joseph II. He had the good fortune to be the intimate friend of Mozart, and to perform in some of the great maestro's operas on their first production. He obtained a year's leave of absence from the Emperor for the purpose of visiting his father, with the understanding that he was to return to Vienna: he accompanied Stephen and Nancy Storace to England, and made his first appearance (1787) in Drury Lane Theatre in the opera of 'Lionel and Clarissa,' when he was received with such favour that he decided on staying in England. For many years he was musical director of Drury Lane, and was afterwards stage manager and principal tenor at the Italian Opera, and also musical director at the little theatre in the Haymarket.

When Sheridan made his arrangement, the company was good, both in the serious and comic departments. Madame Mara, Signora Storace, Morelli, and Michael Kelly were the chief singers. The great Noverre was ballet-master, and there was a numerous and well-chosen corps de ballet, led by Didelot, Gardel, D'Egville, Mdlle. Milau (afterwards Madame Gardel), and the 'fascinating Hilligaberg,' who was one of the most popular dancers ever seen. She was the greatest favourite among the dancers with the public. Her style was perfectly natural, but peculiar; she had 'a lively expression of innocent apprehension or perfect festivity,' with a wild elastic spring, dancing entirely from her feelings.

When she had exhausted her few steps, she used to run off the stage with the most captivating archness. Noverre was an irreproachable ballet-master, and brought out some superb spectacles. Among other pieces he produced his magnificent ballet of 'L'Iphigénie en

Aulide;' the splendour of the spectacle, the scenery, the richness of the decorations and dresses could not have been surpassed. The dancing was exquisite; and the acting of D'Egville, as Agamemnon, is described as having been 'inimitable;' the triumphal car with



MICHAEL KELLY.

horses, the grand marches, processions, and, above all, the fine grouping of the corps de ballet, 'proved Noverre to be the greatest master of his art.' He was a 'passionate little fellow,' Kelly says. 'He swore and tore behind the scenes, so that, at times, he might really have been taken for a lunatic escaped from his keeper. I once felt the effects of his irritation. The horses attached to the car in which D'Egville was placed were led by two men from Astley's, one of whom was so drunk that he could not go on the stage. I had been acting in the opera, and was so eager for the fray, and so anxious that things should go on right, that I had taken off my opera-dress, and put on that of a Grecian supernumerary, and, with a vizor on my face, of course was not known. I held one of the horses, and all went correctly. I was standing behind the scenes, talking to one of the men, in my supernumerary dress, and perhaps rather loudly; Noverre, who was all fire and

fury, came behind me, and gave me a tremendous kick, "Taisez-vous, bête!" exclaimed he: but when I took off my vizor, and Noverre found he had been kicking his manager, he made every possible apology, which I of course accepted, and laughed at the incident, at the same time begging him not to give me another such striking proof of personal attention to the concern.'

At this period Mr. Sheridan was heavily in debt. Of his power of raising money, and of talking over his creditors, Kelly tells many amusing anecdotes. 'I, myself,' Kelly says, 'was not keeping out of debt, and my wine bills were very large. One day, I called upon him, and requested he would let me have a little money; he put me off, as usual, with promising he would let me have some to-morrow. To-morrow was always his favourite pay-day; but, like the trust-day at a French inn, that morrow never did I see. In the midst of all that, he told me how much

he was pleased with Tom Welsh (then a boy), when he sang "Angels ever bright and fair," the night before. "He should be encouraged," said he; "go and tell him that, in addition to his salary, I shall send him a present of two hundred pounds; and you shall take it to him." "Shall I?" said I (making the quotation from "Lionel and Clorissa"); "I think the borough may be disposed of to a worthier candidate;" but neither Welsh nor I ever got a half-penny of the money.

In 1793, Taylor having at length triumphed over all his opponents, opened for the season; Signora Storce and Morelli, Madame Mara and Kelly, being his principal performers. Mara was now beginning to decline in popularity. When no longer engaged at the Opera, she sang at concerts, and for a short time at Covent Garden, and subsequently with the Drury Lane company while they performed at the King's Theatre during the rebuilding of their own house. She ultimately left England and went to Russia. In 1794, Madame Banti was the leading singer. The most remarkable event during 1795 was the falling of the walls of the theatre.

Taylor and Sheridan were proprietors in 1796. Kelly was still stage-manager, Jewell was treasurer, Madame Banti was prima donna. This year Stephen Storce died, of an attack of gout. His death was hastened by his persistency in attending the rehearsals of 'The Iron Chest.' The last twelve bars of music he ever wrote were for a song which his friend Kelly was to sing in that piece. He left a widow and several children.

At this time it was the fashion for the subscribers to attend the rehearsals at the Opera. The Duke of Queensberry was so constant an attendant that no weather deterred him. He was a perfect enthusiast in musical matters, and considered himself qualified to volunteer instruction to eminent singers. As he was a powerful patron, and in the habit of giving superb dinners, the singers were willing to humour him.

In 1797, Madame Banti, Braham, and Viganoni were the chief performers. These three singers were admired by all lovers of the musical art. The only one who was found fault with was Braham, who was severely censured for yielding as he did to the false taste of the day, and departing from pure style and correct judgment to obtain ephemeral applause. An Italian of ability, named Badini, was 'poet' to the house

—a position which was retained by him for several years. Badini, like many of his brother poets, suffered his affairs to fall into serious derangement; he was frequently arrested, and on these occasions the singers and musicians of the establishment always raised a subscription to relieve him. The claims on their generosity became so importunate however, that at last the subscription was given with great reluctance and an express determination that it should be entirely discontinued. A fortnight elapsed after this, and then, one Tuesday night, a friend of Badini's appeared with a doleful countenance to make a collection, stating that 'poor Badini was dead,' and that the money petitioned for was urgently needed for the purpose of burying him. The performers could not refuse so pitiful a demand; every one gave something to make up the sum required. But to their astonishment, the following Saturday night, Badini appeared in person, attired in new mourning, and seated in the centre of the pit, amusing himself nonchalantly with his opera-glass and snuff-box. This final donation was appropriately termed Badini's resurrection money.

Viotti was leader of the orchestra for the first time in 1797. It was asserted that Madame Banti had for some time been exerting the power she had acquired at the King's Theatre, to displace Cramer, a most excellent leader, in order to instal her countryman, Viotti, in his situation; and the articles of Cramer having expired at the close of the season of 1796, she accomplished her object. Madame Banti was the reigning favourite both with the public and with the potentates of the Operahouse. The audience paid no attention to any other performer; they chatted and laughed while her comrades were singing, but listened with delight to her airs, and asked, with negligent surprise, when the curtain fell, 'Is the opera ended?' The next year (1798), Salomon led the band, Viotti having been obliged to leave the country under the Alien Act. To rebut certain charges brought against him, Viotti published an affidavit, wherein he declared that he 'frequented no coffee-houses, belonged to no clubs, and had never in any situation uttered a word which might be deemed offensive to the British government.' It was said, however, that he had been in the revolutionary army, and had uttered intemperate expressions against the late Queen of France, Marie Antoinette.

Whether he had done so or not, was never proved, but it was well known that he had rejected the patronage of that queen for many years, and, after accepting it, had lost her favour through the ungovernable violence of his temper. The queen had commanded him to play before the royal family, and he had obeyed; but being interrupted in his performance by the noise caused by the entrance of the Count d'Artois, Viotti broke off abruptly, and indignantly quitted the room.

The veteran Cramer died in 1799. He had been keenly affected by the unfair treatment whereby he had, two years previously, been removed from the Opera-house, and by various misfortunes, which undermined his health, and hastened his death. The suavity of his manners, and the superiority of his talents, had gained for him universal liking.

Taylor was still proprietor in 1800 and 1801, Kelly being stage-manager. Winter was composer, Viganoni and Madame Banti were the chief singers. Taylor, whilst directing the affairs of the Opera, passed a considerable part of his time in the King's Bench, or within its 'rules.' This did not inconvenience him in the least. 'How can you conduct the management of the King's Theatre,' said some one to him one day, 'perpetually in durance as you are?'

'My dear fellow,' he replied, 'how could I possibly conduct it if I were at liberty? I should be eaten up, sir, devoured. Here comes a dancer,—"Mr. Taylor, I want such a dress;" another, "I want such and such a thing." One singer demands to sing in a part not allotted to him; another to have an addition to his appointments. No,—let me be shut up, and they go to Master-son (Taylor's secretary); he, they are aware, cannot go beyond his line, but if they get at me—pshaw! no man at large can manage that theatre; and in faith,' added he, 'no man that undertakes it ought to be at large.'

Mr. Taylor was as little mindful of the rules of the King's Bench as of any other rules which stood in the way of his inclinations. He would frequently, whilst supposed to be within the rules, steal off into the country, and spend a day in fishing, an amusement of which he was extremely fond. Once he contrived to 'get hold of a considerable sum of money, which he laid out in the purchase of an estate in a county affording opportunity for his favourite pursuit (fishing): here he went and lived, ate,

drank, and fished, till, at the end of two or three months, the officers of the law hooked him, and reconveyed him to his accustomed habitation.' This escapade, however, was as nothing to another, when he left the rules, went down to Hull, at the time of an election, and stood—unsuccessfully—from the borough, absenting himself from the 'rules' for some weeks. He sometimes pretended that he found the weight of the Opera management a serious burden. Ebers, with some friends, was dining with him one day, when the subject of capital punishments was started. During the discussion, Taylor appeared buried in thought, and did not rouse until one of the gentlemen at table strongly advocated the abolition of capital punishments in all cases, and another demanded, 'What would you inflict, then, on a criminal of the worst kind?'

'By Jove,' cried Taylor, suddenly, 'make him manager of the Opera-house. If he deserves a worse punishment, he must be a devil incarnate.'

Madame Banti, having maintained the position of prima donna at the King's Theatre for twenty-eight years, resolved to return to Italy, as her voice and her health began to fail. In 1802, she wished to take a benefit before she quitted the London stage, but feared that she could no longer count on attracting a crowd. Mrs. Billington had returned to England the previous year, and was 'a prodigious favourite'; so Madame Banti requested her to appear with her, which she did, by permission of Messrs. Harris and Sheridan. Every one was eager to hear these two great singers in the same opera. The piece was 'Merope,' by Nasolini; and Madame Banti appeared for the first time in male attire. Signor Banti, in order to secure the money, had the pit door barricaded, and stationed himself there, with some of his friends. An immense crowd had collected at the doors, before the usual hour of admission, and on the bolts being drawn the rush was so great that the barricade was broken, and, with Signor Banti and his money-boxes, carried to the very extremity of the pit. The Signor, 'recovering himself, and getting on his legs,' gazed around him, and in acute disappointment exclaimed—'O Santa Maria! de pit full! de galery full! all full!—and no money in de box!—what will my Brigida, my angel wife say, when I shall have nothing in my box for her?' In June, Mrs. Billington appeared with Madame Mara, at the farewell benefit of that famous singer.

The public had for some time greatly desired to have a new singer at the Italian Opera, so Taylor offered Mrs. Billington an engagement, which she accepted. Her brother, Charles Weichsel, was engaged as leader of the orchestra, to the exclusion of Salomon. The patrons of the Opera were enchanted with Mrs. Billington. Her popularity was unbounded as long as she chose to remain at the Opera-house. Viganoni was generally the tenor with whom she sang.

In 1803, Mr. Taylor sold to Mr. Francis Gould one-third of his property in the Opera, for which he received 13,333*l*. Mr. Gould was a native of Ireland, and a man of family and fortune, well known in fashionable circles. His brother, an Irish baronet, possessed large estates. On his arrival in England, Mr. Gould instituted the Union Club, at the house in Pall Mall formerly occupied by the Duke of Cumberland. He had passed the greater part of his life on the Continent, and was an excellent



MRS. BILLINGTON AS MANDANE.

critic, and a clever amateur in the arts, and had a clear knowledge of the practical details necessary for the working of a large theatre. He was perfectly adapted for the management of an extensive theatre, especially as he understood music; and he was, moreover, a truly honourable, kindly man, his only fault, as a manager, being that he was too keenly sensitive. From the day he undertook the direction of the Opera until the day of his death, Michael Kelly was his stage-manager, confidential friend, and chief adviser.

The agreement between Taylor and Gould assigned the entire management of the theatre, during their joint lives, to the latter, and vested it in the survivor on the decease of either of them.

Mr. Gould engaged the celebrated Madame Grassini to sing alternately with Mrs. Billington. The attractions of these two exquisite singers drew crowded houses. Viganoni and Braham were the male singers. D'Egville was ballet-master and chief dancer, with the 'graceful and handsome' Mdle. Deshayes.

A further purchase was made in 1804 by Gould, from Taylor, increasing his entire share in the theatre to seven-sixteenths,—the price of this further share being 4,163*l*. At this time Taylor had become so embarrassed that he was compelled to mortgage his remaining nine-sixths to Gould for 5,700*l*.

On the 15th of June, 1805, occurred the memorable riot at the Opera-house,

which was caused by an ill-advised order from the Bishop of London that the curtain should be dropped before twelve o'clock every Saturday night, or the house should be deprived of its license and shut up. The curtain fell just as Mdlle. Deshayes and Parisot, two very much admired performers, were dancing a popular *pas de deux*. The anger of the audience passed all limits, and the scene which ensued defies description. Finding that their mandate for drawing up the curtain and finishing the ballet was not obeyed, the gentlemen and ladies screamed, hooted, yelled, threw all the chairs out of the boxes into the pit, tore up the benches, broke the chandeliers, jumped into the orchestra, and smashed all the instruments of the unlucky musicians. Kelly, as stage-manager, addressed the rioters, but they would not listen to him, and eventually quitted the theatre with shouts of victory. Mr. Goold, however, identified some of the ringleaders, and commenced actions against many of them for damages, which cost them 'hundreds of pounds;' but he discontinued legal proceedings, on condition of the offenders acknowledging their ill-behaviour, and satisfying those who had been injured.

Early in 1806, Goold offered Madame Catalani an engagement. Never did singer create such excessive wonder as Catalani. Siboni was the tenor engaged with her. For many years she reigned alone at the Opera, for she could endure no rival near her throne. Siboni was succeeded by Tramezzani, an infinitely superior singer, who was much admired. Shortly before Madame Catalani appeared for the first time, Goold engaged the celebrated buffo singer, Naldi. Morelli, who no longer attracted, was dismissed. The poor fellow, from an inordinate passion which he had for insuring in the lottery, was steeped in poverty, and Naldi was generous enough to supply him with every necessary for life, and allowed him, till the day of his death, a weekly stipend of two guineas, which was regularly transmitted to the ex-buffo every Saturday night. Naldi had been a lawyer, and was a very well-educated man. Morelli had been simply running footman to Lord Cowper. The termination of Naldi's life was very sudden and awful.

Goold died in 1807, and Taylor became sole proprietor. From the time of his first purchase to his death, which was hastened by the trouble and anxiety incident on his connexion with the theatre, Mr. Goold alone had con-

ducted the Opera. Catalani was the great attraction of his management, and her successive engagements entailed on the establishment an expense exceeding any that had ever fallen to the lot of Opera director before. The sums which Madame Catalani received were almost incredible. She used to say that in Italy she sang for fame, in France for charity, and in England for money.

Scarcely was Mr. Goold dead, than disputes commenced between Mr. Waters, his acting executor, and Mr. Taylor, which involved the Opera in litigation, almost interminable. Taylor, on whom the management devolved, was disinclined to submit to the authority which Mr. Waters wanted to exercise in the theatre as Mr. Goold's executor. Kelly continued to be stage-manager, but was displaced the following year (1808) by D'Egville, who had been ballet-master. Every day the feeling of bitterness increased between Waters and Taylor. In 1808, Waters advertised that he would not be responsible, as Goold's executor, for any debts contracted by Taylor.

Madame Catalani and Tramezzani were the leading favourites for several years.

Finding that the Opera was become so expensive an amusement, especially since Catalani's engagement, Taylor was obliged to try every expedient to raise money. He very foolishly, in 1812, attempted a daring experiment, in advancing the terms of the subscription to the highest rate possible, and caused intense ire among his patrons. The subscribers met, and decided that the increase of price was not justified by the expenditure, and sent notice to that effect to Taylor. He replied, that if the subscribers would not agree to his increased demand, he would shut up his boxes; and, indeed, he refused several noblemen and gentlemen admission into the boxes for which they had already paid. In consequence of this behaviour on Taylor's part, many of the subscribers withdrew from the theatre, and persuaded Caldas, a Portuguese wine merchant, to reopen the Pantheon, for the performance of concerts, ballets, and such music as could be given without infringing the licence of the King's Theatre. The company engaged by Caldas was very indifferent. Spagnoletto led the band. At first this opposition to the King's Theatre prospered—so long as the ire of the nobility and gentry against Taylor lasted—but after a time it languished, and a compromise



was effected with Taylor, although he persisted in keeping up the prices of his boxes, and in excluding those who would not agree to his exorbitant demand. As for Caldas, he was deserted, and left to ruin. Taylor lost six thousand pounds by the quarrel. He was perpetually embroiled in lawsuits; but he rather liked being plunged in disputes and difficulties, as he happened to be of a fiercely litigious disposition, and as obstinate as man could be. One day he was dining with Mrs. Billington, when a gentleman, in the course of conversation, said to him, 'You must be dreadfully harassed, Mr. Taylor, by the frequent lawsuits you are engaged in.' 'Oh no,' replied he, 'not in the least: I own that they plagued me a little at first, but, from habit, I could not now exist without them!'

In 1813, the Lord Chancellor ordered that the whole of Goold's property should be sold, and that Waters should not interfere in the management.

At this time, Waters was proceeding against Taylor in Chancery; and it was ultimately ordered that the painful disputes should be ended in a summary fashion, and the house sold. The latter order was very vexatious to the public, so it was proposed by private friends that Taylor should relinquish his interest in the theatre to Waters; but it was almost impossible to come to any arrangement whereby this might be satisfactorily settled, as the two men were totally antagonistic in manners, habits, and characters. Waters was a perfectly well-bred, quiet man. Taylor was in every respect his opposite. Waters would not for any consideration attend to affairs on Sunday: Taylor, chiefly on account of his fear of duns and writs, selected that day in preference to any other. Taylor could not see Waters without becoming 'passionate and scurrilous.' However, as Taylor was perfectly embarrassed, and unable to carry on the theatre for want of money, he was obliged to give way to some extent. Waters desired to have the entire management confided to himself. It was proposed, therefore, that the management should be intrusted to him, under certain restrictions. Ebers was constantly going to and fro between Waters' house and the King's Bench, where Taylor resided; and at length he persuaded Taylor to agree to an arrangement. Taylor had seriously contemplated the possibility of turning the Pantheon into an Opera-house, and had absolutely entered into a treaty with Mr. Cundy, lessee of the Pantheon. Difficulties, however,

had arisen between them as to terms, and the creditors of Caldas had such claims upon the house, that he was deterred from following his intention.

When Waters' people attempted to gain admission to the King's Theatre—when an amicable arrangement had been entered into by the principal parties—Taylor's people sternly refused to let them enter. From words the rival retainers came to blows, which ended by the Taylor party being ejected with ignominy. During the night, however, the Taylor party again renewed the contest, stormed the theatre, effected a breach in the stage door, gained admission to the stage, and drove the enemy into the Haymarket. The Chancellor was again appealed to, and Waters obtained an order from the Court, by virtue of which he established himself securely in his newly-acquired domain.

Taylor apparently ended his days in prison, occasionally availing himself of the privilege granted by the rules. His favourite companions in prison were Sir John and Lady Ladd. They used to enjoy agreeable evenings together, and when Taylor's spirits would grow too much elated from the combined effects of good wine and lively conversation, Lady Ladd would recall him to the minor proprieties of life by emptying the teakettle over him.

Waters, as proprietor, advertised that the Opera would not open until a manager was appointed by the Lord Chancellor. Early the next year (1814), however, he announced that he was legally appointed sole manager; and the house was opened as soon as possible. Madame Sessi was the principal performer.

Rossini then engrossed the stage. No operas by any other master (with the exception of Mozart's works) were now to be tolerated. From the withdrawal of Catalani, in 1813, the Opera gradually declined, and fell at last into such a state of degradation as to cease to be fashionable, and to be nearly deserted.

Mr. Waters' first season (1814) was happily a prosperous one, for the peace had just been concluded, and London was thronged with foreigners. He gained seven thousand pounds during that year. 1815 was a blank in operatic history; so wretchedly bad were all the male performers that even their names cannot be remembered. The first woman (Sessi), was the only one who redeemed the credit of the house.

In 1816, by direction of the Chancellor, the theatre was again put up for sale, and was purchased by Waters for

70,150*l*. Unfortunately, he had spent nearly all his money in improving the house, and was unable to pay into Court even the first instalment of the purchase money, so he mortgaged the theatre, with a number of houses which were his property, to Mr. Chambers, the banker. Taylor, probably vexed at being entirely deprived of any interest in the Opera, which had been his great passion, and being addicted to practical jokes, beguiled the tedium of his life in the King's Bench by writing anonymous letters to Mr. Chambers, who unhappily chanced to be a nervous man. These letters all confidently predicted the speedy ruin of Waters, and pictured his penniless state in vivid colours. On

one occasion he wrote saying that Michael Kelly, the singer, was lying at the point of death at Brighton, and that he had something to communicate respecting Waters, of the utmost importance to Mr. Chambers. In a state of absolute trepidation, Mr. Chambers took a post chaise and hurried to Brighton, where he found Kelly seated in his balcony, sunning himself, with a pineapple and a bottle of claret before him. Unluckily, Mr. Taylor's prophecies concerning Waters came true. Waters' embarrassments increased year after year—his difficulties accumulated day by day.

In 1816, Mr. Sheridan died.

K. C. C.

### MARRIAGE NOTES IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.



people who have gone through the process of falling in love, and being engaged, and finally marrying, that it is one of a deeply gratifying character, looked back upon in after life as a bright spot round which many sweet and pleasant recollections cluster.' But, in spite of these and several other reasons in favour of extreme tenderness being felt towards, and toleration accorded to, young couples in the above interesting circumstances, the writer concludes by saying that, 'As a rule, young people engaged to be married are rather a bore than otherwise.'

Parents, mothers especially, bow to the inevitable, and come up smiling to their fate, like that

'Old man of Dundee, who frequented the top of a tree,  
When disturbed by the crows, he abruptly arose,  
And exclaimed "I'll return to Dundee!"'

They make up their minds during their daughters' infancy and childhood to endure a certain amount of mild anguish on their behalf when years of



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and common, he wrote saying that Michael Kelly, the singer, was lying at the point of death at Brighton, and that he had something of consequence to communicate to Mr. Chambers. In a state of absolute desperation, Mr. Chambers took a post-chaise and hurried to Brighton, where he found Kelly seated in his bed-room, smoking himself, with a pipe, apple and a bottle of claret before him. Unluckily, Mr. Taylor's prophetic utterances concerning Waters came true. Waters' underaments increased year after year—his difficulties accumulated day by day.

In 1816, Mr. Chambers died.

R. C. C.

### MARRIAGE NOTES IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.



"Eh! below the heap! The little sentiment of having that he may succumb to the charms of another person! The romantic uncertainty which gives the affair the deepest, emotional interest in youth. He is sure to love—in 'old eyes' no more. In fact, he has made the mistake of which youth during the last few weeks have been so incessantly talking up, and all that remains to be done is to be done by his lawyers and milliners.

Overland in the abstract," says a writer in the "Saturday Review," "the spectacle of two young people engaged to be married ought to be agreeable and interesting," and for this reason, "because they are, or are supposed to be, happy"—because we have been informed by people who have come through the process of falling in love, and being engaged, and finally married, that it is one of a deeply gratifying character, looked back upon as the life as a bright spot round which many even and pleasant recollections cluster." But, in spite of these and several other reasons in favour of someone tenderness being felt towards, and toleration accorded to, young couples in the above interesting circumstances, the writer concludes by saying that, "as a rule, young people engaged to be married are rather a bore than otherwise."

Parents, mothers especially, low to the inevitable, and come up smiling to their fate, like that.

NOTE: None of Thomson who suggested that any of his work  
Was described by the crowd, to satisfy them,  
And concluded "The House in Thomson."

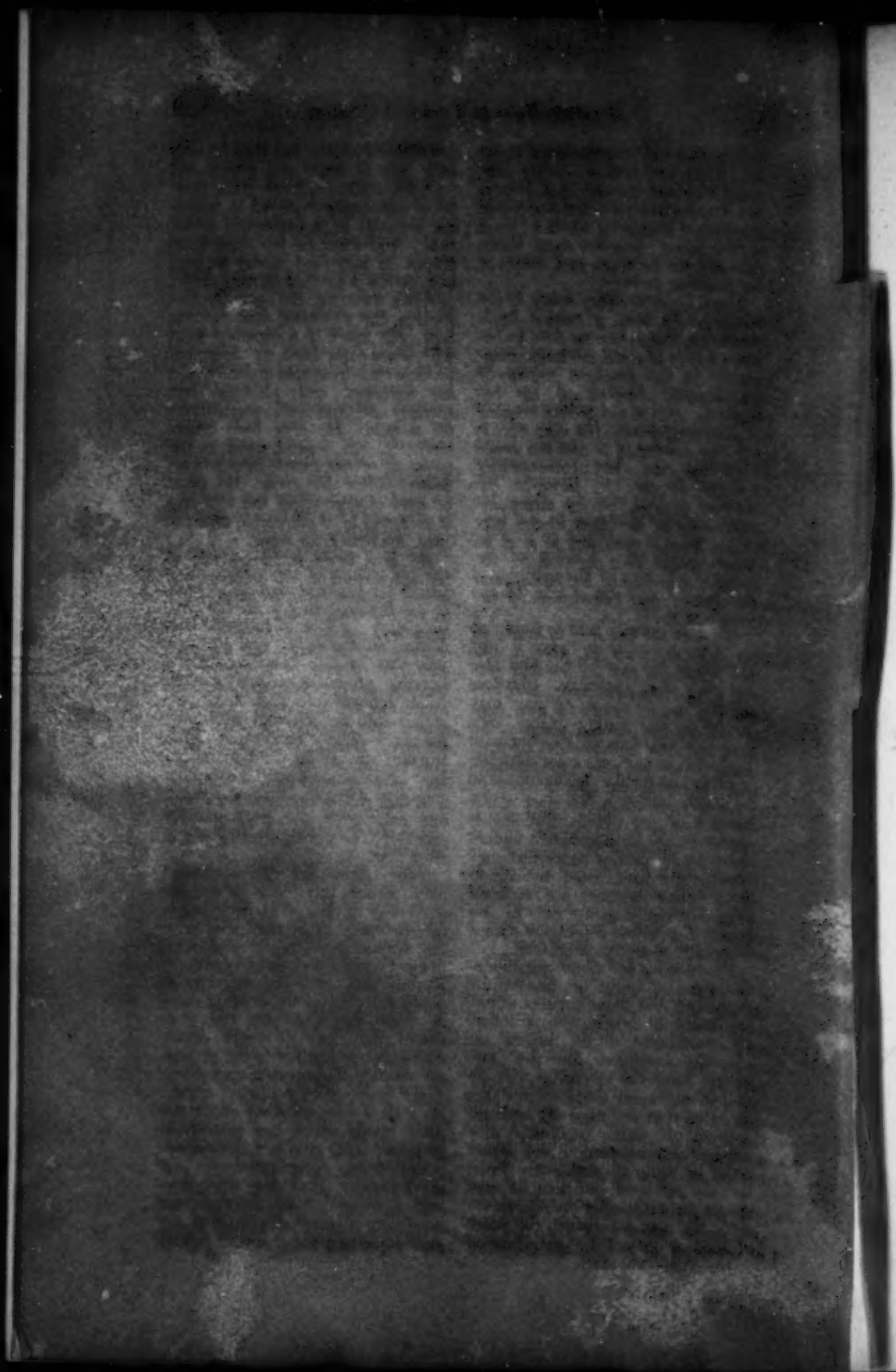
They look up their minds during their daughters' infancy and childhood to endure a certain amount of mild anguish on their behalf when years of



[See "Marriage Notes in Town and Country."

AT ST. GEORGE'S, HANOVER SQUARE.

Drawn by John Gosselin.]





indiscretion and 'engagements' come on. Therefore they are better prepared to stand the deferred dinner, and the constantly-rendered abortive attempts at regularity which a 'lover in the house' imposes upon them, than are the brothers and sisters of the reigning power.

These remarks apply solely to the country. In town a man, if he is worth anything, has no time to become a bore of even moderate magnitude to the practical cousin, or unæsthetic brother of his betrothed. But in the golden languor of a country-house, the man who is not the master of it and the lands adjoining, and has consequently nothing to do but improve the occasion of this visit by airing his sentiments of devotion to the lady of his love, is sore put to it if he would avoid the derision of the juvenile members of the family, and the hatred and detestation of the friends of it.

She does not like him to hunt; so he vows solemnly to 'give it up,' and keeps his vow till the first season after their marriage. She does not like him to shoot; 'a gun may go off in the wrong place.' She does not like him to ride out with her brother: her reason for nourishing this last dislike she imagines to be deeply buried in the most secret recesses of her heart. But she is mistaken: it is thoroughly understood by all parties concerned, and consists in a deep-rooted distaste to the direction in which her brother's rides invariably tend—viz., to the house of a valued neighbour with a house full of pretty daughters.

These being her views, an impartial observer might be forgiven for supposing that Time's wings would be leaden to Edwin, who is not at all accustomed to be thrown on his own resources. But the 'forgiven' impartial observer will do well to mark and learn his mistake, in order that he may say and do nothing to hurt Angelina's nice sense of self-satisfaction and happy belief in being all-sufficient. True, he may not hunt, but then he may go out for a ride after breakfast with her. He may not disturb the peace of mind or body of the partridges on

her father's estate, but then he may help her to water her plants and feed the little chickens, who, from being unhappily deprived of maternal care, are in a precarious situation. And when he has done these things he may read poetry to her; and having done that he may dress!

Now, watering the plants, and feeding the chickens, and reading how 'the touch of a vanished hand will never come back to' him, and putting on a dress-coat at six o'clock, are harmless and pleasing, but scarcely all-sufficient occupations for a man. He may bore others intensely, but depend upon it the *ennui* of others dwells into insignificance before his own. He must be glad enough when the trial trip is over, and he is allowed to take the lady 'for better, for worse.'

He is a mere nothing—save to the old women of the village, upon whom he has bestowed large sums to be invested in tea on his wedding-day. All the interest then centres in the lady; and the man who has of late been enjoying a horrible pre-eminence, may congratulate himself into once more subsiding into an object of lofty indifference. The 'tears and white muslin' are all in her honour, not his: he is ignored with a completeness that will alone throw a redeeming halo over the day, however much of 'the worse' he may get in after life.

These same old village women play rather the most prominent part, next to the bride, in the day's transactions. It is they who have the arranging of the floral decorations of church and churchyard. It is they who have the audacity to plant red china cows, holding roses in their mouths, upon the font, where the sight of them causes much risible emotion to the youngest brother of the bride, and much anger to the orderly-minded curate. It is they who, standing about the path along which her pedestrian progress lays, give her lachrymose benedictions, congratulations, and good wishes. It is they who, having recovered from their former condition of deep gloom, give her smiling assurances of future felicity

when she comes out leaning on her husband's arm. It is they who heap confusion on the chief bridesmaid and the groom's-man by audibly suggesting that 'they will be the next, surely,' and that 'they was made for each other, they was.'

But, though gloom is out of place on the day to which everyone connected with either party has been looking forward with impatient anxiety—especially the bride's home circle if she be the eldest daughter of a large family—and though tears are to be decidedly reprehended as disfiguring to the shedder, and depressing to the spectators, and futile in the extreme, still 'Laughter, holding both his sides,' is not, or ought not to be, the prominent figure.

When one thinks about it—not lachrymously, not gloomily, but seriously, and sensibly—there is really nothing very hilarious about two people, each with a mine of thought and feeling as yet undiscovered by the other, tying themselves together for life, for better, for worse. Surely no man who has a heart that can feel, and a mind that can consider—no woman worthy of the name, can enter into this perilous estate without having made large resolves of toleration. *He* will not be always ready to swear that she makes defect perfection—to sacrifice every other form of pleasure for the supreme one of watering her plants and reading poetry to her. Her society, when he has it, or can have it, all day long from this time forth, will not suffice to him in lieu of that more brilliant society from which, during their indulgence in love's young dream, he has partially withdrawn himself. She must know this; she must feel it, as she stands before the glass on that last morning while the bridal wreath and veil are being finally adjusted. She must know this, and feel it, and think even that it is well that it should be so, and be confident within herself that the change from sentiment to sense, from the deep, deep, unvaried blue of early passion, to the many-cherished shades of mutual love, is one that she can meet without a mur-

mur, or the shadow of repining. If she cannot be thus confident, she had better doff the bridal veil and keep him yet a while in hand in the character of the impassioned lover. And he, for his part, must know well that she will not always continue to be the sylph who now flies to greet him with the airy grace that is as pleasing to his taste as her affection is grateful to his heart. In time his presence will fail to call forth the blushing ensign of love she now hoists so readily; and in its place an angry flush may rise at the slightest suspicion of severity in the exercise of his legitimate paternal authority over one of half a dozen unruly children.

It will be well for both to think of these things: it will be better still to go on in the path they were treading before these thoughts arose; 'for,' says an old writer, 'the first blessing God gave to man was society, and that society was a marriage.'

Very fluently, very sensibly, very earnestly, and, consequently, *very well*, many lady-writers of the present day labour to prove, in novels with a purpose, and in social science pamphlets, that to the woman who, through lack of opportunity, has remained single, has fallen the better and happier part. But, fluently, sensibly, earnestly, and well as they labour, their labours are fruitless; for, the cause they, in all honesty of heart advocate, is bad. They fail to bring their theory home to the heart like a great truth, just because it is not a truth, and because, ingeniously and determinately as they may word and state it, they can never give it the semblance of a truth. By all means let the woman, who through the dissolution of some early dream, or the woman to whom the fairy prince has not yet come, make the best of the hard fate that is hers; but do not let her cry aloud that it is the best and brightest; not alone because she will not be believed, but because on the face of it her statement bears the marks of absurdity.

We do not hesitate to plead guilty to having a very warm feeling for, and kindly interest in, the order of

things which has been considered good since the world began—since to be a wife was first counted an honour.

Let us go out and see what the joy-bells of a certain fashionable church are ringing about in short hilarious peals. I did so one memorable day about three years ago, and I have that little sketch of the scene, a copy of which will accompany these 'Notes.' There is as yet no unusual stir outside the door of the edifice, nothing to explain the 'tintinabulation that so musically swells.' The pavement is occupied by a nurse, a baby, a perambulator, a soldier, a butcher-boy, and a street Arab with a bundle of papers under his arm. From the last intelligent animal we learn that a wedding is to come off in the short space of ten minutes from the time he is now speaking, and that if we like to wait for it we can, but he declines doing anything of the kind. Having thus kindly apprised us of his intention, he vaults over a post and vanishes round a corner, and then, our eyes being no longer attracted and held fast by his premature and therefore painfully calculating expression, we are free to perceive that a very elegantly-appointed travelling-carriage is already waiting outside. 'Probably the bridegroom has arrived in it,' we think, as, after one glance of admiration at the handsome swamp-backed browns, we pass into the church, and, looking up the aisle, see a gentleman energetically buttoning his gloves, and trying to make it appear to the old pew-opener that the curtsies she perseveringly drops every half-minute have met with all the recognition, verbal and otherwise, that they will have the chance of doing.

The moments are flying, and we begin to sympathise with the lonely gentleman, when presently, having buttoned his gloves, he surreptitiously looks at his watch. 'It's a fashions thing, waiting for a bride,' we think, solemnly remembering how, once upon a time in Scotland, the kirk was decked at morning-tide for a similar ceremony; and how, when dame and knight, priest and bridegroom were all assembled, the

lady was not only not there, but was discovered to have fled over the water with Jock o' Hazeldean. Our sympathy is already assuming the form of sorrow for that gentleman, and we have just succeeded in recalling poetical passages from Scott and Byron which bear strongly upon his case, when all at once there is a crackling as of *moire antique* along the aisle, and we collect our misplaced sympathies and store them away for another time; for somewhere within the multitudinous folds of that *moire antique* is the bride herself. It is all as prosaically correct as possible. The lady was determined not to be too early, but it is evident that she was equally determined not to be too late.

She is sufficiently young and pretty and graceful to make the uneasiness of the expectant bridegroom intelligible to us. The fate he has earned by abjuring his bachelor pleasures will surely be a brighter one than is that of the bride's maternal uncle, who follows his niece up to the altar with an expression that says plainly, 'If you think I commit myself to leaving you half my property, or even to giving you a handsome round sum down, by coming to your wedding, you are very much mistaken.' He would have considered himself neglected had he not been asked; as it is, he regards himself as having been made the victim of the most base cajolery. Anything connected with marriage and giving in marriage causes him to be more outwardly crabbed and inwardly acid than is customary even with him; and yet, for all that, it will be no mean or grudgingly-given memento of the day which will pass from his into his niece's possession when the ceremony is over.

She—to return to the star of the day—passes along seeming to unwind as she goes a long and never-ending train of white silk, Honiton lace, tulle, and other ethereal vanities. On looking closer we discover the first-named to be her own dress; the last, the tulle and other ethereal vanities aforesaid, to be her bridesmaids'. She has eight of these

attendant nymphs selected, it would seem, with a rare judgment and skill, for each sets off and enhances the beauty of the other in a way calculated to draw tears of approbation from the ready eyes of the aesthetically susceptible. Four of them are in white and pink—the palest, most delicate pink that ever gladdened the heart of a blush rose—and four are in mountainous billows of white, tinged here and there by means of a ribbon with just so much of blue as the reflection of a glacier would give. And four are brunette, and four are blonde, and all are so exquisitely pretty that we neither wonder at, nor blame the evident impatience of, the eight men who stand somewhere behind them in attitudes variously expressive of weariness at the length of the service; for an artistically-bedecked saloon, in which a wedding breakfast, provided by Gunter, is being celebrated, is unequalled ground for flirtation, and loveliness looks yet more lovely by daylight in luminous clouds of tulle. Knowing, therefore, that these things are so, we entertain the wondrous kindness of fellow-feeling with the impatience which looks upon the four officiating clergymen as so many ‘lions in the way’ to happiness.

They fade away now, this group: they melt gradually and gracefully into their respective carriages; and we have scarcely time to hurl a mental slipper after them, and to wipe away the tears of commingled bliss and agitation, before other candidates for matrimonial honours make their appearance.

A different group this to the last we gazed upon. They come in together *alone*, this bride and bridegroom, the latter with an expression of impatient care upon his face that is not well to look upon on a man’s wedding-day; and she! well, she is very, very quietly and simply dressed, and closely veiled; but through it all we see that she is young and pretty, and trembling violently with a something that is more than maiden bashfulness.

Poor young couple! launching your little bark of happiness alone and unassisted in what now, doubt-

less, appears to you a romantically surreptitious manner, you will probably hold the views of your parents and advisers before the year is out, when you find you have ‘run away’ into the thousand miseries of that very confined circle round which both ends of a microscopic income must be made to meet!

But even while we think these things the ceremony is over; for the one curate, who is deemed all-sufficient to unite these two, has a rapid enunciation, and leaves out a good deal of the service. No time is here required for the graceful bestowal of a glove upon one bride-maid and a bouquet upon another. All is hurried in the process that binds them together for a lifetime of better or of worse.

Ere the ink is dry on the page they have just signed, a rustle as of autumn leaves is heard, and we straightway cease to think of the runaways, or if we think of them at all, to consider theirs anything but a hard fate in comparison with that which challenges us now:

‘Married for money!’ Every atom of the long procession that now comes sweeping up the aisle cries aloud these words. Autumn leaves, indeed! Can that weird old woman with the painted, wizened face, and false hair and teeth, and robes of virgin white—of youthful, fresh, unsullied *white*, a ghastly mockery!—can she doubt for one moment that the handsome young craven, who has been brought by his extravagance and his friends to this horrible pass, marries her for her money, and loathes her in his soul? Impossible! And yet, with the hideous beauty of a woman who has not learnt that most difficult of all things, how to be old gracefully, she affects to regard it as something other and beyond the purely mercantile transaction which in reality it is. As he stands there perjuring himself, and while she grins horribly a smile that must plant a dagger in the false heart which had once warmed to the smile of another—ay, that even yet has power to warm it—we can scarcely decide which of the two has our deeper contempt, the man who has sold

himself, or the woman who has bought him. But as we cannot satisfactorily settle the question, we leave it undetermined, and come out from the oppressive presence of those who are, with vows before God, contracting a perjured and unholy bargain.

Out into the streets again, where on all sides of us we see food for future marriage notes. A butcher-boy, hatless, but radiantly self-possessed, is posed in a graceful attitude against some area-rails. His remarks must be full of rich wit and unstudied humour, for they call up peals of laughter (in a female voice) from below. A soldier, long, stiff, and straight, and with a minute cap very much on one side, has paused by the side of a perambulator, in which are a couple of large-headed infants, the said perambulator being driven by a pretty housemaid who

entertains feelings of profound but vague respect for that noble institution, the British army, as represented by the inhabitants of Knightsbridge barracks. A young lady rides by on a handsome bay mare, and, singularly enough, a half-finished ice is immediately dashed down by a gentleman whose horses have been compelled to stand steadily outside that confectioner's shop for an hour, and presently he is by her side, and she wears the happy look of one who knows she has been waited for patiently and dutifully.

We cannot conclude a paper of this kind better than in the words of Thomas Ingoldsby:—

'The state of society seldom requires,  
People now to bring home with them un-  
buried friars,  
But they sometimes do bring home an inmate  
for life,  
Now—don't do that by proxy—but choose  
your own wife.'



## THE EXILE; OR, THE TRUST DEED.

THE spray falls on my listless hands,  
 The light wreaths curl on high,  
 As prone upon the yellow sands  
 Depressed and limp I lie.

Beyond, where Sol the water warms,  
 The giggling naiads splash,  
 And Gauls regale their manly forms  
 With rare and rapid wash.

Around, the ear-ringed fishers ply  
 The oar, or mend the net,  
 And digging infants shrilly cry  
 For sweetstuff to Babette.

In quaint attire, and various hat,  
 Bold Britons crowd the pier,  
 Directing prurient glasses at  
 The dripping mermaids near.

Anon the boat appears in view,  
 Puffs hoarsely through the *Port*,  
 And pale-faced men and maidens blue  
 Make wildly for the shore.

The sun goes up, goes down the wind,  
 The light wreaths curl on high,  
 The yellow sands grow hot behind,  
 The nymphs come in to dry.

The Britons bold seek cooler shades,  
 The fishermen recline,  
 The dreadful children hug their spades,  
 And caper home to dine.

My weary limbs I raise, and shrink  
 At last to my hotel,  
 To lounge and lunch, to think and drink,  
 And wait the dinner bell.

Then to that warm unwholesome meal,  
 With darkened face I go,  
 'Mid countrymen who praise the veal,  
 And 'like a tabble-do.'

Till greasy *plats* and curious wine,  
 On cloth of many a stain,  
 With heat and smell and talk combine  
 To drive me forth again.



The sun goes down, the stars come out,  
The light wreaths curl on high,  
Bands, that since noon have lurked about,  
Break forth and rend the sky.

Breaks forth apace the new-fed horde  
Whom nought that's cheap repels,  
And sit and reap what joys afford  
Bad music and bad smells.

And sit, and spit, and fight for chairs,  
Until the hat comes round,  
When prudent generalship prepares  
To make for other ground.

*Etalblissement* of dubious fame,  
Or grim *Tintilleries* ;  
Cool dominoes, the cannon game,  
Or half-franc whist, p. p.

While, deaf to such exciting bliss  
To bed I sadly creep,  
To dream of endless days like this,  
And curse them in my sleep.

Oh, England ! from thy bosom rest,  
What doth it profit me,  
That for this outcast hole I left  
The country of the Free ?

Oh, Dover Castle ! stern and wild,  
That rear'st thy evil head  
In anger 'gainst thy erring child,  
What boots it that he fled ?

' Stone walls do not a prison make,'  
Where noble Bethell rules,  
Nor iron bars the spirit break  
Of aught save bankrupt fools.

'Tis only on this churlish soil  
That hapless traders fail,  
Come face to face with 'envy, toil,  
The *huissier*, and the jail.'

Why should I hearth and home resign,  
To France and Cristol bound,  
When peace and England might be mine  
For ninepence in the pound ?

Oh, never by the tradesman just  
Shall it remembered be,  
That I refused a deed of trust  
To him who trusted me !

I'll straightway leave this hated shore,  
Put my affairs in train,  
And hold my head erect before  
My fellow-man again.

I'll hie me blithely to that Court,—  
Not where the rabble pass,—  
But where the 'quality' resort,  
And purge themselves *en masse*.

I'll call on Jones, I'll look up Brown,  
Examine Jack's accounts;  
And put them up, and put them down  
For various quaint amounts:

Construct a stately balance sheet,  
A calm yet sad narration,  
Whose moving tale and figures neat  
Will court investigation.

Then, swiftly filed, exulting, freed,—  
Unless my hopes be crost—  
I shall have done, I trust, a deed,  
Will trouble Israel's host.

Or even should my well-laid plan  
By knaves be overthrown,—  
Better two years in Whitecross than  
A cycle in Boulogne!

W. K. C.

# L'AFRICAINNE.

I HAVE seen the 'Africaine!' This may not appear an important announcement. It would seem that no flourish of trumpets is needed as accompaniment to the words, 'I have been to the Opera;' but, as the copybook says, 'Circumstances alter cases.' To effect an entrance to the Grand Opera in Paris, at the time that I saw the 'Africaine,' was an enterprise fraught with difficulty. Money is not all-powerful. It cannot purchase health, strength, honour, love, obedience, troops of friends; neither could it, in the month of May last, buy the sound of a note of Meyerbeer's great work. Crowds were rolled back from the Rue Dronot, their portmonnaies in their hands, and anguish in their hearts. There was no room to be had, not even for

the ghost of Cimarosa, or the attenuated spectre of Paganini. I remembered the story of Robert the Bruce and the spider, and persevered and failed. Perseverance does sometimes fail—oftener than is supposed. I execrated the memory of the Bruce, and thought of a broom in connection with the spider. But where energy and perseverance were useless, front staircase influence was triumphant. I knew a man, who knew a man who had interest with the administration. I obtained tickets, and at only the play-bill prices. Robert the Bruce went up in my estimation, and the spider again occupied his usual place in entomological history.

The people of Paris are excitable, but I should doubt if there has been

any theatrical excitement equal to that occasioned by the production of the 'Africaine,' since the first night of the 'Barber of Seville.' Of course I speak of the play by Beaumarchais, and not of the opera by Rossini. Then crowds of patched and painted beauties and beaux dined in the theatre in the dressing-rooms of the actors, and took their seats two hours before the rising of the curtain. I do not know whether anything of this sort occurred at the Grand Opera in May last, but it is not impossible. Enormous prices were paid for boxes and seats, and the very pompiers who were told off for duty on the night, felt that they were enviable and superior beings. In fact, to have a seat for the first night, was to be *du monde*. It was a brevet of rank, fashion, and celebrity. It was said that the Emperor himself put off his visit to Algiers, in order to be present. Happy were the wives and fiancées of the critics of the daily papers, and dreadful, despairing, and desolated was the doom of those rejected of the Bureau, to whom the *ouvreuses des Loges* and municipal guard were objects of envy.

But to the opera. And here let me say, that I do not propose speaking of it from a strictly musical—that is to say, from a mere fiddler's or pianist's point of view. People who understand music, or who say they do, are too technical—too apt to look upon those who do not possess an intimate acquaintance with crotchets and quavers, minims and semibreves, as outer barbarians. They will tell you that no man, not a musician, can understand an opera; and they will criticise a great work as a Japanese would Westminster Abbey, who, lost in admiration of details, little bits of carving, and quaint masonry, overlooks the majestic structure in its entirety. Surely a man may understand the contents of an edition of Shakespeare without knowing how to set up type.

The 'Great Eastern' was not launched under circumstances of more difficulty than the new opera. In the first place it was called the

'Africaine,' and African women are usually black. It was said that the lady who was cast for the part of the heroine, pointedly refused to black her face! She would for one night disfigure her natural complexion for the sake of her dear Meyerbeer. Yes! yes! But as the opera might run hundreds of nights, to black her face for hundreds of nights! No! no! The direction, knowing that time and tide, and *prime donne* are alike uncontrollable, said: 'Be it so! If you cannot snow black, snow red. Let the Africaine be of the colour of an Imperial postage-stamp.' So one difficulty was diluted. Then the *corps de ballet*, who, in the fourth and fifth acts were to be dancing girls of the hue of Ethiop, declared that not for Meyerbeer, or Scribe, or Terpsichore, whoever the gentleman might be, or the Regisseur or the Jockey Club, or the editor of the 'Figaro,' would they black their faces for the period of ten minutes. Eh! Mon Dieu! to hide one's features and to dirty one's neck and one's ears! and how was it to be washed off? and it would get into one's hair and one's bonnet. Ah! this Monsieur Meyerbeer was of an inconvenience! By silks, satins, high-heeled boots, and artificial flowers—by pearl-powder, parasols, and patchouli, they would none of it. A general order was passed by the direction for skins of salmon-colour, but this it would appear that the ballet evaded—for the complexions of the *danseuses*, when I saw the opera, were white as Europeans'—nay, whiter.

As neither scene-painter, nor decorator, nor machinist knew the locality hinted at in M. Scribe's libretto; whether the scene was laid in Africa, Mexico, or the East or West Indies, a fiat has since gone forth in favour of Madagascar, the difficulties of mounting the piece were legion. However, a general order for 'salmon-colour'—that is, for the sacrifice of consistency to expediency—reconciled everything.

A short quotation from a Biographical Encyclopedia will give us the slender foundation of M. Scribe's plot.

'BARTOLOMEO DIAZ, a Portuguese

navigator, who discovered the Cape of Good Hope.

VASCO DE GAMA, an illustrious Portuguese navigator, to whom belongs the merit of having discovered the route to the East Indies by sea. In 1497, Emanuel, King of Portugal, sent him to endeavour to double the Cape of Good Hope, which he accomplished, and then sailed along the eastern coast of Africa, having proceeded as far as Calicut, where he arrived in May, 1498, and was received by the prince of that place with great pomp and ceremony. After an absence of two years he returned to Lisbon, where he arrived in September, 1499. In 1502 he went out with twenty ships, and returned the following year with thirteen which he had captured in the Indian seas.

These data, and, it is said, a poem by Camoens, were the original inspirations of the veteran composer and librettist.

The house is full. The musicians are entering the orchestra. Some of the toilettes in the boxes are charming; but the faces and the figures are not like those we see at Her Majesty's or Covent Garden. There is a family of Algerine swells, in the Algerinest of costumes, in a box on the right hand. They have brought a baby with them; if not a baby it is a dwarf mummy, or a large-sized fan, or a small bale of dates, or an Eastern distaff. It must be a baby, for an Algerine, low of stature and gorgeous of raiment, carries it out. What on earth could they want with a baby at the Opera? Children in arms, even when Algerine, should not be admitted.

There is a hush and silence in the theatre. The audience settle into their seats quietly. The ghost of a great genius may be present. Chapeau bas to the spirit of Meyerbeer! The *chef d'orchestre* has arrived, bringing his bald head with him. They have always bald heads, those *chefs d'orchestre*. Is it the swinging of the bâton that wears off their hair? The overture!

Its commencement is soft, low, and liquid, and but few instruments are employed. Gradually it swells

into a larger, louder volume, but there is no crash. It is tender and suggestive as the breeze of a summer night. It contains one air which you hope to hear again in the opera; and a storm, effected without any instrumental trickery, mutters threateningly. The overture is short, and the curtain rises on the Hall of Council of the King of Portugal, at Lisbon. There is a tribune and seats dispersed about the stage, semi-circularly; the effect of the *decor* is magnificent and amphitheatrical. Donna Ines enters with the inevitable confidante, and asks her why her father, Don Diego, has required her presence in the council chamber. Anna, the confidante, does not know, and Ines begins bewailing the absence of her lover, Vasco de Gama, whom she has not seen for two years, and who for her sake sought glory with the great mariner, Diaz; she recalls to her memory the song he sang beneath her balcony—all this, of course, in recitative, until she sings Vasco's adieu, a delightful melodious barcarole, of which the first four lines run—

Adieu, rive du Tage,  
Oh j'ai reçu le jour;  
Adieu, charmant rivage,  
Oh j'ai connu l'amour.

Don Diego, Ines' father, enters and presents to her Don Pedro, the President of the Council, as her destined husband. The young lady objects. Is not her heart plighted to another? But her father wills it, and his authority is backed by that of the king himself. Don Diego is an old grandee of the old type; and Don Pedro is a noble of equal arrogance. Nothing could be more courteous and haughty than the bearing of Monsieur Castelmarty as the père noble; nor more politely cruel than that of Monsieur Belval as the comparatively young President of the Council. (They reminded me of Mr. Walter Lacy in his admirable performance of Don Sallust, in 'Ruy Blas.' Diego inquires if it is true that the great mariner, Bernard Diaz, has been lost at sea, and Pedro answers that the 'African hurricane' had wrecked

his vessel on a desert island. Ines tremblingly inquires if his faithful comrade, Vasco de Gama, has escaped. Pedro replies, disdainfully, that he knows nothing of men without a name; and hands her a list of those reported dead. Ines reads—'Vasco has perished;' and a charming terzettino is sung. Inez quits the scene. The Grand Inquisitor, several bishops, Don Alvar, the leader of the party of progress, and the members of the Council enter in grand procession. The Inquisitor, and what I will call the extremely Conservative party, take the left of the stage, and Don Alvar and the younger senators take the right. The Inquisitor and the bishops join in a grand chorus, imploring the protection of heaven on their deliberations. The assembly seats itself. The robes of the ecclesiastics, the costumes of the senators, and the armour of the guards in attendance form a splendid mass of colour. The recitative recommences. Don Pedro announces to the Council that the king would signalize his reign by territorial discoveries equal to those of Columbus of Spain. The Grand Inquisitor, characteristically enough, objects to discoveries, and sneers at them. Diaz and his equipage have perished; what need of further expeditions? Don Alvar rises to reply. One mariner—but one has escaped the general wreck—solicits an audience of the Council. Don Pedro asks his name.—Vasco de Gama. Don Pedro and Don Diego have hardly time to utter 'Lui, Grands Dieux!' when Vasco himself salutes the Council. To noble and inspiring sounds, Vasco describes how, at the moment that he saw his chief and his soldiers overwhelmed by the tempest, he beheld the 'Giant of the Sea—the Cape of the Storm;' how he climbed the rocky sides of the unknown land, and planted his foot upon a soil hitherto untrod by European; and he prays for the Council's intercession with the king to grant him the means of exploration. He promises for Portugal new climates, new commerce, treasures, empire, and prosperity. 'And for yourself?' ironically inquires the

Grand Inquisitor. 'For me!' Vasco replies,—'Immortality!'

Vasco implores the Council to see two African slaves of an unknown race, whose presence proves the existence of the new world he hopes to discover. And, to a wild and singular strain, Selika the Africaine, and Nelusko are brought on. These coloured strangers were found by Vasco in an open boat; and it is explained that an adverse wind had driven them from their native shore.

The Africans are too proud to answer questions, even when proposed by the President of the Council; but Selika 'yields to the voice that supplicates her to reply,' when Vasco begs her to break silence. Nelusko, the attached follower of Selika, in an energetic burst of passion, begs of his queen—for she is a queen—by the God of her islands—by Brahma—not to betray her people. Pedro commands her to tell the name of her country. Selika replies, 'A slave has no country!' A furious debate is held between the two parties. Don Alvar and his followers wish Vasco to be entrusted with a ship. The Grand Inquisitor and the bishops consider the proposal an impiety. Don Alvar says that he would serve his country: the Inquisitor replies that he is offending Heaven. The scene is highly animated; and the idea of party tumult in a deliberative assembly is wonderfully realized. Pedro and Diego, desirous of foiling Vasco, side with the Inquisitor, who proposes that Vasco's charts and papers be committed to the flames. The quarrel becomes furious; but is quelled by the Inquisitor and the bishops invoking the aid of heaven, in the same prayer with which they opened the sitting. The votes are collected. Vasco is again ushered into the chamber: his request is refused. Indignant at the insult, he braves the Grand Inquisitor and his followers, and appeals from their imbecility to posterity. The Inquisitor condemns him to a dungeon; the anathema is pronounced upon him; and the act terminates with one of those tumultuous, contending, pas-

sionate volumes of sound for which the great master is famous.

In the second act we find Vasco in the prison of the Inquisition. Selika is by his side, that

' true joy reaping,

Of those who watch o'er what they love while sleeping.'

'My country!' murmurs Vasco in his sleep. 'My country!' echoes the loving slave. 'I have forgotten it—for him!' The dreamer's next word awakens in the breast of the Africaine a pang of jealousy. The air, 'du Sommeil' is sung by Selika—a weird, Indian song, with an echo reminding the slave of the country she abandons for her love:

' Hélas ! Je t'aime,  
Et malgré moi,  
Mon bien suprême,  
Vasco,—c'est toi !'

Nelusko enters, meditating the death of Vasco, and in a noble strain,

'Fille des rois à toi l'hommage.'

avows his love for his royal mistress, and his detestation of Vasco. He is about to poniard the sleeper, when Selika awakens him. Nelusko is commanded to retire; and Vasco inquires brusquely why he was roused from his dreams of glory and discovery. And here occurs a duo, founded on an idea that is tender, moving, poetical, and at the same time contains the collision of sentiment, and complication of action necessary for perfect dramatic effect. His mind still 'distracted with thoughts of Ines, Vasco turns to the map of the coast of Africa which hangs on a pillar. While shut out from the light of day, he still ponders on the sea, the open air, and the verdant, balmy islands he hoped to give to Portugal. Selika watches him; and points out the passage to the island of which she is queen—thus dethroning herself, and giving up her people, to gratify the ambition of the man she loves. A quotation from the libretto will best explain the position:

Vasco (*perusing the Map*).  
Terrible et fatal promontoire  
Que nul n'a pu doubler encore,  
De te franchir j'aurai la gloire  
De ce côté (*indicating the right*).

SELIKA. Non pas; c'est courir à la mort.

VASCO. Que dis tu ?

SELIKA. Mais par là, sur la droite, est une île,  
Une île immense.

VASCO. Oh ! ciel ;

Only: voilà le passage !

The music swells with the triumph of the discoverer, and of the woman who thinks that she has for ever bound Vasco by the ties of gratitude. Vasco presses Selika to his heart, as he commences the *ensemble* with—

' Combien tu me chère  
Ange tutélaire,  
Par qui la lumière,  
Enfin m'arriva ;  
O service immense,  
Que, dans sa constance,  
Ma reconnaissance  
Jamais n'oubliera.'

For the moment, Vasco, who possesses all the selfishness of genius, loves Selika—the more that she informs him that she is queen of the isle in question, and that there are other countries and other people—fresh worlds to conquer—further up the coast. The ambition of man, and the devotion of woman are, for a moment, completely gratified.

But for a moment. Ines and Don Pedro enter the prison. Ines informs Vasco that she has solicited and obtained his pardon. He is free. Vasco guesses that Ines believes he entertains a passion for Selika; and, in order to destroy her supposition, tells her that she is but a slave. Ines still doubts; and Vasco makes his new love *a present* to his old one—he gives his slave Selika to Ines. The effect of this hideous ingratitude is wrought out in an extraordinary quintette. Monsieur Scribe has again asserted—what operatic librettists, poets, and novelists, ever since the days of Captain Macheath, have gone on asserting—that the man least worthy of women's love, is generally most loved by them. Vasco's brutality is speedily punished. Don Pedro announces that not only has the king accorded him the hand of Donna Ines, but has given him the command of a vessel with which he—Pedro—is to attempt the passage of the seas which wrecked Dias. The African Nelusko volun-



teers as pilot; and the act terminates with a dramatic situation which would have rejoiced the heart of Sheridan's Mr. Puff. Vasco has lost his Ines and the opportunity of immortalising his name. Ines, to free Vasco, has plighted herself to a man she hates. Selika's heart is broken by the terrible ingratitude of the man for whom she has betrayed her people and her gods. Don Pedro revels in the thought that, at one stroke, he robs Vasco of his mistress and of fame; and Nelusko rejoices that the gods have revenged him on Vasco, and that, as pilot to the pioneer ship, so many of the hated pale-faces will be delivered to his keeping.

The third is the famous ship act. The vessel—which is certainly too large, for it does not permit a sight of the sea, and but little of the sky—has three decks or platforms. The lowest—the stage itself—exhibits the cabins of the ladies and of the admiral, Don Pedro. The second platform is the deck proper, where the red shirts of the sailors, and the cuirasses of the soldiers contrast advantageously: and the third tier is the poop, on which the patriotic and treacherous pilot, Nelusko, keeps his watch. Larger sails and the rigging fill up the space between the stage and the proscenium. For all this gorgeous decoration, Meyerbeer has written a sea-anthem—the voices of the women in their cabins, of the grave admiral pondering over his charts, of the two loving, brokenhearted women; of the sailors on the deck, imploring the protection of heaven,—mingling together in a grand mass of sound; while the slave pilot hurries them on to swift and certain death, as he invokes the aid of Adamastor, the Giant of the Storm,—have an effect which can never be forgotten. It is a revelation of art which sinks into the memory, but cannot be described. Colours—blue, red, green—are arbitrary distinctions which every one understands; but it is impossible to convey, by mere words, the rush and sweep of the harmony of a hundred voices and a hundred instruments, obedient to the direction of

one master mind. The clouds grow darker; a storm threatens. Nelusko bids them turn the head of the vessel to the north; and the huge machine is seen to alter its course. A boat hails them; and Vasco de Gama—who, at the price of all his worldly possessions, has freighted a ship to explore for himself—comes on board, and implores Don Pedro to turn from the north, as he is now near the reef whereon the bark of Bernard Diaz was wrecked. Pedro believes that Vasco seeks the presence of Ines, and that his warning is but a pretext. Vasco asserts his innocence of intention, and swears that, in imploring Pedro to alter his course, he is but obeying the dictates of patriotism and humanity. A quarrel ensues; and Vasco draws his sword upon the admiral, who summons the seamen to his aid. Ines and Selika recognize Vasco, whom Pedro orders to be tied to the mast. During this, the wind has risen and the storm has increased. The Africaine and Ines implore Pedro to pardon Vasco. A terrible noise is heard; and Nelusko runs the vessel on the fatal reef. As one side of the ship heels over, the rocks rise in view. Nelusko summons his comrades; and a crowd of Indians precipitate themselves upon the devoted Portuguese. The savages cry 'Death, and no quarter!' when they perceive Selika, their queen, who by a gesture stays the intended massacre.

All these situations, effects, and tableaux would be well enough in a melodrama; but they are too circus-like for grand opera. The *piling-up* of agony should always be avoided; and it is a pity that the act does not end with the striking of the ship upon the rock—after which, Indians brandishing spears, red fire, and recognition of royalty, are mere anti-climaxes.

The fourth and fifth acts take place upon the island over which Selika is queen, which is presumed to be Madagascar, or somewhere there; for Monsieur Scribe has so confused his readers with Africaines, Vishnu, Brahma, and Central America, that it is most convenient to throw overboard geographical ac-

curacy and accept the no-man's land and the habits and customs of everywhere, so often seen at the theatre. The verdure is rich and tropical, and the architecture of the palaces and temples of Aztec weirdness and magnificence. By the laws of Brahma all strangers touching the sacred soil of the island are condemned to death; and it is unpleasant to think of the fate of the survivors among the crew and passengers of Don Pedro's argosy. Vasco alone survives, and in a ravishing melody describes the effect upon his senses of the realization of his hopes. Here is the spicy air, the prodigal earth, the dazzling riches of nature he has dreamt of, and we are reminded of Ferdinand in the 'Tempest.' The Brahmin soldiers surround him, and he is a third time saved from death by Selika. The high priest of Brahma—Vasco is always unfortunate with priests—declares his doom; but on this occasion, as on every other, the love, the readiness, and natural talent for mendacity of woman, saves the ingrate. 'What,' asks Selika, 'if this cavalier be no stranger, but a brother? He is my husband. On a distant shore he saved my life and honour by espousing me.' Nelusko would unmask the deception; but Selika swears that if Vasco dies she, too, will rest with him in the grave. The marriage rite is solemnized, and as the grandeur of catholicism was expressed by the music of the first act, so the barbaric splendour of Brahminism is realized in the scenes on the island. The duo in this act between Selika and Vasco, with its harp accompaniment, is as tender and intense as it is melodious. The ballet commences. There is a grand Indian march, a religious march, the lotus flower, a choreographic idyll, and a pas de jonqueurs. Dazzled by the beauty and the power of the queen of the island, Vasco again feels a renewal of his love. He will live for her, and for her only, in the flowery land over which she reigns. His country and his hopes are forgotten. The priestesses place on Selika's head a crown of flowers, and form, with their thin gauzy veils, a trans-

parent rampart round her. Vasco, delirious with love, sings to his royal bride:—

'Vers toi, mon idole,  
Où, mon cœur s'envole,  
Et pour toi j'immole,  
Ma gloire à venir!'

At this moment the voice of Ines is heard singing the song Vasco used to sing beneath her balcony:—

'Adieu, rive du Tage,  
O regrets superflus,  
Amis de mon jeune âge,  
Vous me ne me verrez plus!'

The spectre of the love of his youth in the old world rises to reproach him.

In a grand duo, Ines, who has been saved from the wreck and is in the power of Selika, tells the injured queen that she has met Vasco on the shore. Selika meditates vengeance—Ines awaits the blow! But the heart of the Africaine has been touched by the spectacle of her youth and innocence, and Selika magnanimously sacrifices her own happiness for that of her lover. She commands her slaves to put her faithless husband and Ines on board Vasco's vessel, which still rides safely by the shore. At the same time she resolves to seek death beneath the shade of the poisonous upas tree. The scene changes, and the fatal upas is seen upon a promontory that looks upon the ocean. Amid all the remarkable music of this remarkable opera, the symphony for stringed instruments only, with which this last scene opens, is the effect which strikes and fixes itself most permanently in the mind of the fortunate auditor. It is a strain of such ravishing sweetness, with a sweep and rush of melody at its termination that literally floods the senses. On the night that I was present, it was redemanded rapturously; for the strange delicious thrill with which it dominates the nerves, contrasted with the critical pleasure received from ordinarily good music, there is the exact though indescribable distance that separates genius from talent, and inspiration from judgment. Selika dies beneath the tree; magnificently sensuous music describes the deli-

rious ecstasy produced by its fatal exhalations. The gorgeous paradise promised to the faithful by the religion of Brahma reveals itself to her eyes, and an aerial chorus of invisible spirits contrasts with the pagan heaven opened to the mind of the dying queen. Nelusko finds her at the moment she sees the vessel containing Vasco and his bride receding from the shore, and resolves to die with her. A last quotation from the libretto will best give an idea of the touching and tender termination of the opera.

NELUSKO. Déjà, sa main est froide et glacée  
O terreur !

C'est la mort !

SILIKA (dying). Non ! C'est le bonheur !  
Chœur Adrien.

Pour elle s'ouvre le séjour  
Oh règne un éternel amour.

Monsieur Belval, as Don Pedro, Monsieur Castelmarty, as Don Diego, Mademoiselle Marie Battu, as Ines, were all that could be wished musically and dramatically. Mademoiselle Marie Saxe and Monsieur Naudin, as the heroine and hero, though they sang charmingly in the fourth and fifth act, hardly rose to the passion of the scene. They did not fail, they succeeded only with the music, not with the characters entrusted to them. Monsieur Faure's performance of Nelusko was in every sense a perfect specimen of the lyric art. Of the mounting of the piece, the scenery, the costumes, the grouping, the *mise en scène*, the ballet, it would be impossible to speak in terms of too high praise. Both orchestra and chorus were perfection. The writer of these pages is content to wait until the pro-

duction of the opera in London, when he feels confident that his fervent admiration of a work of genius will be endorsed by all those for whose opinions he entertains respect. His humble praise can no more add to the reputation of Meyerbeer than can the small carplings of those odd folks who find that the Africaine 'is no such great things after all,' and who admire drawing-room ballads of the 'O'er the blue sea gently dancing,' and 'I love her, I love her, my dark-eyed gazelle' class, detract from it. Perhaps some of these critics are themselves composers, and

'vastly prefer their own puppy how wows,  
To the loftiest war-note the lion can pour.'

The libretto is not without faults, among them may be mentioned the unsatisfactory termination of the opera. The hero is not seen in the last act; poetical justice is unsatisfied; Vasco de Gama is a low-hearted, selfish fellow, and yet he remains successful and unscathed while his moral superiors suffer. And however truthful to life, this is none the less unpleasant in the region of dramatic romance. On the other hand, the self-love of Vasco de Gama forms the contrast to the disinterested devotion of the African and Africaine. Possibly, from scenic and practical difficulties, this masterpiece of a master-mind may be less often played than 'Robert le Diable,' the 'Prophète,' or the 'Huguenots'; it is not the less a lasting work—a monument erected by a great genius to his own vast power. Who but Meyerbeer could have written such an opera? who but Scribe so excellent a libretto?

## SUNSET THOUGHTS.

WHEN we were at school together, Jack,  
There was down on neither's cheek!  
Now!—if we look back along our track—  
Which has gained what he would seek?  
For the woman you loved is lying  
In a churchyard far away,  
And the sunset, so swiftly dying,  
Seems to you the best of the day.

My picture is in the Academy, Jack,  
 And they've hung it on the line;  
 And critics, good lack, discern a knack  
 Sublime in this daub of mine.  
 But the eyes I dreamed should see it,  
 And the lips, whose praise I'd prize,  
 Have passed from the world. So be it.  
 But I live when the daylight dies.

For I see over roof and chimney, Jack,  
 The gold in the western sky.  
 Though the present's black as the stormy wrack—  
 The hour of release draws nigh.  
 For peace will be won when life is done,—  
 Beyond the gloom lies the gold.  
 Oh! the sunset hour has for us a power  
 And a charm it lacked of old!



# LONDON SOCIETY.

FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE  
MORAL AND PHYSICAL CONDITION OF THE  
POOR OF THE METROPOLIS.

## REPORT AND ACCOUNT OF THE SOCIETY

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A. THOMAS.

*From the Painting by E. G. Girardot.*

# MY LADY'S SONG.

[See the Poem.]



# LONDON SOCIETY.

AUGUST, 1863.

'THE BLUE UNCLE TOM'S'



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